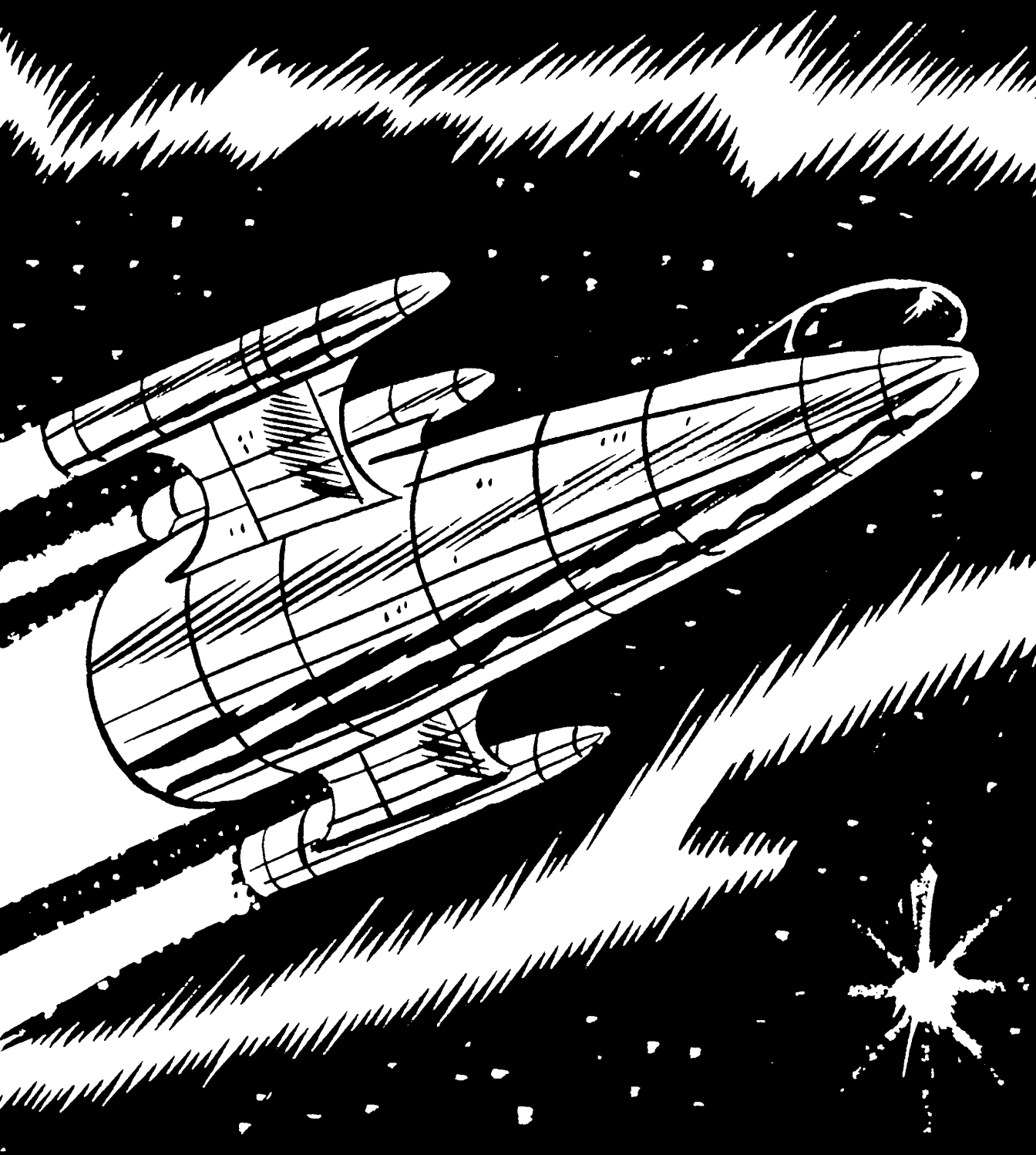
THE PLANETOID
AND OTHER STORIES

ILLUSTRATED BY
JOE ORLANDO

FOREWORD BY **PAUL LEVITZ**

INTRODUCTION BY **THOMMY BURNS**

THE PLANETOID



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FIRST APPEARANCES

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"A Mistake in Multiplication" in *Weird Fantasy* #9, September–October 1951
"The Planetoid!" in *Weird Science* #10, November–December 1951
"Not on the Menu" in *Weird Fantasy* #10, November–December 1951
"Why Papa Left Home" in *Weird Science* #11, January–February 1952
"The Worm Turns" in *Weird Science* #11, January–February 1952
"The Thing in the Jar" in *Weird Fantasy* #11, January–February 1952
"The Monsters!" in *Shock SuspenStories* #1, February–March 1952
"Chewed Out!" in *Weird Science* #12, March–April 1952
"A Man's Job!" in *Weird Fantasy* #12, March–April 1952
"Say Your Prayers" in *Weird Science* #13, May–June 1952
"Don't Count Your Chickens..." in *Weird Fantasy* #13, May–June 1952
"The Big Stand-Up!" in *Shock SuspenStories* #3, June–July 1952
"They Shall Inherit" in *Weird Science* #14, July–August 1952
"The Expert!" in *Weird Fantasy* #14, July–August 1952
"The Ad!" in *Weird Fantasy* #14, July–August 1952
"Strictly Business!" in *Shock SuspenStories* #4, August–September 1952
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"What Fur?!" in *Shock SuspenStories* #5, October–November 1952
"The People's Choice!" in *Weird Science* #16, November–December 1952
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"Not So Tough!" in *Shock SuspenStories* #6, December 1952–January 1953
Cover, *Weird Science-Fantasy* #26, December 1954
"About This Report" in *Weird Science-Fantasy* #26, December 1954
"Was This "Fairly Heavy Body" a Flying Saucer?" in *Weird Science-Fantasy* #26, December 1954
"The Eastern Air Lines Case" in *Weird Science-Fantasy* #26, December 1954
"The Gorman–Fargo, N.D., Case" in *Weird Science-Fantasy* #26, December 1954
"The Mantell–Godman Case" in *Weird Science-Fantasy* #26, December 1954
"The Muroc Air Force Base Case" in *Weird Science-Fantasy* #26, December 1954
"The United Air Lines Emmett, Idaho Case" in *Weird Science-Fantasy* #26, December 1954
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"The Kaliszewski–Moore Statements" in *Weird Science-Fantasy* #26, December 1954
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"1952 Sightings — The Secretary Kimball Case" in *Weird Science-Fantasy* #26, December 1954
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"Saucers Over Washington, D.C." in *Weird Science-Fantasy* #26, December 1954
"The 1952 Hamilton A.F.B. Case" in *Weird Science-Fantasy* #26, December 1954
"Recent Developments" in *Weird Science-Fantasy* #26, December 1954
"To Summarize This Report, E.C. Asks the Following Questions of the United States Air Force:" in *Weird Science-Fantasy* #26, December 1954
Stuart Greetings (ad) in *Weird Science-Fantasy* #26, December 1954
Mason Shoe Mfg. Co. (ad) in *Weird Science-Fantasy* #26, December 1954
Science-Fiction Book Club (ad) in *Weird Science-Fantasy* #26, December 1954

THE PLANETOID
AND OTHER STORIES

ILLUSTRATED BY
JOE ORLANDO

WRITTEN BY
AL FELDSTEIN

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ILLUSTRATED BY
REED CRANDALL
GEORGE EVANS
WALLACE WOOD

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EC Comics did not publish writer credits, and its master records no longer exist. Based on the best information available, we believe the creator credits above to be accurate. We welcome any corrections.

PAUL LEVITZ

AN IMPROBABLE TALE

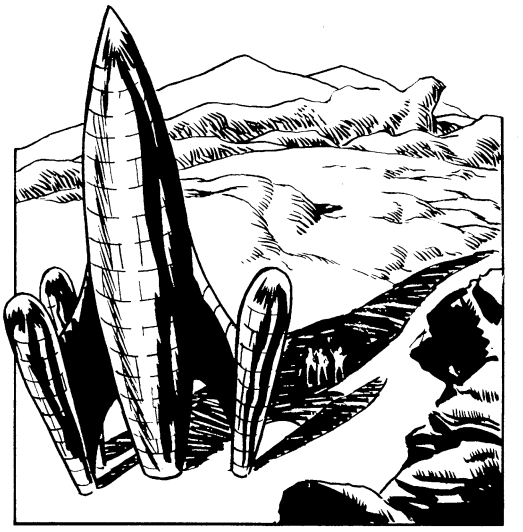
It's hard to believe it's been two decades since I saw Joe Orlando smile. In the 26 years we worked together, watching that sly smile slip across his face was a constant pleasure. So many things could make it happen: a well-cooked meal, a good vintage, a prank carefully executed, a beautiful piece of artwork by a master, a glimpse of one of his students' faces as they grasped the lesson he taught, or his brush stroking across the board leaving a line perfectly placed. He was a man who delighted in both taking in the joys of life and in his ability to give those joys to others through his genius.

And the sheer improbability of this book would have made him smile so widely.

Joe was a young man when he did the stories between these covers, an artist stepping out of the enormous shadow of his slightly younger but already far more acclaimed mentor, Wally Wood. They came into the world of comics at the beginning of the darkest time for the medium in America, a decade that began with an industry starting to feel criticism build that would topple most of the publishers and drive the creative people out of comics altogether or into an uncomfortable period of hiding their professions. As EC was publishing these comics, the storm of what scholars call a media panic was building, month by month. Bill Gaines, the publisher, and Al Feldstein, the editor, collaborated on most of the stories, ignoring the howling winds outside 225 Lafayette Street as they grew louder and louder. But even as the EC crew whistled past the graveyard (as Joe was wont to put it), the calls for their heads increased.

OPPOSITE: In this never-before published photo, Joe Orlando offers a sly smile at Annie Gaines Ashton's baby shower at John Ficarra's house on Staten Island, October 19, 1997. Orlando was delighted to help EC publisher Bill Gaines refine his palate and became a connoisseur of fine wines. *Mad* editor Nick Meglin stands behind Joe's right shoulder. Photo by Irving Schild.

At the drawing board, though, nothing could shake Joe's concentration. The economics of the time meant that he had only a few days to illustrate each story, filling the space on the pages below the captions and balloons already securely locked into place to discipline the artist's storytelling. The EC artists were friendly rivals, each striving to outdo the others with the most powerful and outrageous images to match the tales they were given. And if Joe's smile burst out while he worked, it was in anticipation of the hoped-for goal — Bill Gaines's magnificent laugh as he looked over the finished pages.



But if you had told Joe that we would be reading these stories seventy years later, or that learned professors would be writing monographs for scholarly journals about them, debating the meaning and influences behind tiny elements in the imagery, he would have shaken his head in disbelief. The comics industry seemed unlikely to survive the 1950s (there were enough people working hard to ensure that, and they had vastly more resources and credibility than the publishers, much less the writers and artists). The few

fans EC had were young men, writing in letters or assembling awkwardly published fanzines with circulations smaller than, say, the PTA bulletin of one of the schools where students' comics were being gathered for burning. No college in America studied the form of comics, no books were published about their artistic value, and any copy that survived those book burnings was likely to grow moldy in someone's attic, not be enshrined in a university library or museum exhibit.

Joe lived to see all those things change, to be invited to travel to the legendary Lucca Festival in his native Italy as a celebrated guest, to receive every honor a comics creator could earn. He smiled at all of those developments, but it was the bedazzled smile of someone who can't quite believe what's happening to him. The scars of the 1950s were deep, and even as he watched (and helped) the comics field change so dramatically, deep down, it didn't feel entirely real.

There were no collections of Joe's artwork in his lifetime. He would have one of the most diverse careers of the EC contributors: *Mad Magazine* and *National Lampoon*; cover art for *Newsweek* and illustrations for *Sesame Street*;

DC
CAN YOU DRAW US? WE'RE LOOKING FOR FRESH, NEW ART TALENT!
DC COMICS INC.'S MANAGING EDITOR JOE ORLANDO WILL APPEAR AT THE CONVENTIONS IN PERSON
TO VIEW ARTISTS' PORTFOLIOS!
ONE LUCKY ARTIST WILL BE HIRED FOR DC'S 1981 SUMMER ARTIST APPRENTICE JOB IN NEW YORK CITY! IT COULD BE YOU!
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Daredevil for Marvel Comics and *The Inferior Five* for DC — even providing artwork for the phenomenally recognized *Watchmen* and creating the advertising art that brought to life the Sea Monkeys. As an executive at DC, he would have a role in publishing the company's first book and first collections of artists' life works, but his own name would only grace the cover of a collection of his work years after his passing.

By the time Joe died, it was no longer *completely* improbable that a book like this could exist. EC Comics had become legendary — inarguably one of the two or three peak moments for the American comic book. There were beautiful archival editions of the original EC tales (the Russ Cochran–curated hardcovers sat on his office shelves, reminding him of the magic he'd participated in). But the EC magic was a collective phenomenon, a moment when fate brought together an extraordinarily talented group of people, perhaps at the height of their creative prowess. The individual contributors went into the field's Hall of Fame, one by one, but with a couple of exceptions, were more famous for what they did together than as individual artists.

And yet, here it is.

A lovely hardcover collection of stories illustrated with passion. Each one done under a tight deadline, required both by the publishing process and the hard economics of being a freelance artist, paid by the page at rates barely over the price you paid for this volume, and even if adjusted for inflation, could only be described as embarrassing. But with pencil or brush in hand, Joe had no focus on those limitations, only on the magic he was creating on the page. Creating for you, even if you hadn't yet been born when he sat down at the board to make it happen.

Joe wasn't a very traditionally religious man, or particularly spiritual in any sense that's become fashionable, but somewhere out there, he's watching you pick up this book. He's enjoying your grimace as you read a scary moment or, if it leads you to another collection of his stories, he'll be cheering the end of "Judgment Day," his favorite of all his stories. Favorite because of its powerful anti-racist message? Or simply because he knew it would piss people off, and the people it would offend were exactly the kind of people he wanted to annoy. Either way, he's smiling.

Improbably.

OPPOSITE: DC Comics placed this ad in *The Comics Journal* #56 May, 1980. The main art is by José Luis García-López. Joe Orlando contributed his self-portrait.

PAUL LEVITZ *is a comics fan (*The Comic Reader*), writer (*Legion of Super-Heroes*), editor (*Batman*), executive (decades at DC Comics, ending as President and Publisher), and historian (*Will Eisner: Champion of the Graphic Novel*). His* 75 Years of DC Comics: The Art of Modern Myth-Making *won an Eisner Award in the U.S. as well as awards in the U.K. and Germany.*

He teaches comics-related courses at Columbia and Pace Universities. His most recent graphic novel is Unfinished Business *(Dark Horse, 2021). He began his professional career as Joe Orlando's assistant editor.*

Paul has received both the Bob Clampett Humanitarian Award and the Dick Giordano Hero Initiative Humanitarian of the Year Award. He was inducted into the Will Eisner Award Hall of Fame in 2019.

JUS' A LIL' LONGER GLO.
OKAY.! OKAY.! HOLD IT.! NOW I GOTTA CHECK MY METER.
AND I END UP WITH A DOUBLE EXPOSURE - @X&~.! G~X~..
THANX FROM JOE+GLO

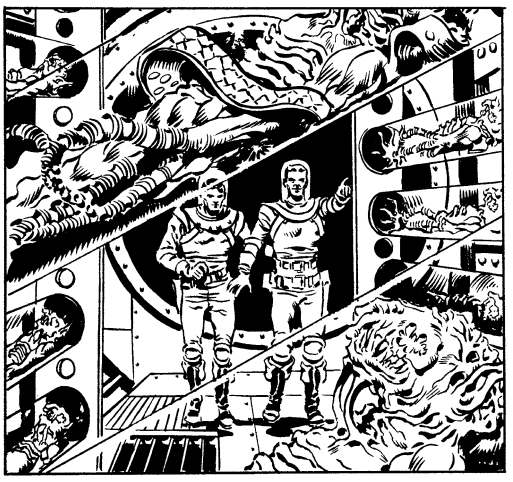
THOMMY BURNS

ORLANDO ACHIEVES ORBIT

"I'd like to take this opportunity to express the gratitude I feel towards Wally Wood for the amount of help he gave me when I first started. When I met Wally, I really wanted to be a Western illustrator. Then I met Wally. He got me into science fiction, and he was a tremendous amount of help to me."

– Joe Orlando at the 1972 EC Fan-Addict Convention, New York City

Joe Orlando recalled to Paul Levitz in 1975 (*Amazing World of DC Comics* #6) that "Woody (Wallace Wood) had the EC account, but I was working on other publishers. We started working as a team because he liked my drawing, and I was just knocked out by his inking. Then Woody told me that they (EC) were looking for other artists, and that since they loved his work so much, they were looking for another Wally Wood. I got my first story ... and was sure I'd get fired when I brought it in. And I looked into (EC editor Al) Feldstein's face, and he said, 'Terrific — we have another Wally Wood.' I couldn't believe it. From then on, I was a regular artist, getting a job of six or seven pages every two weeks."

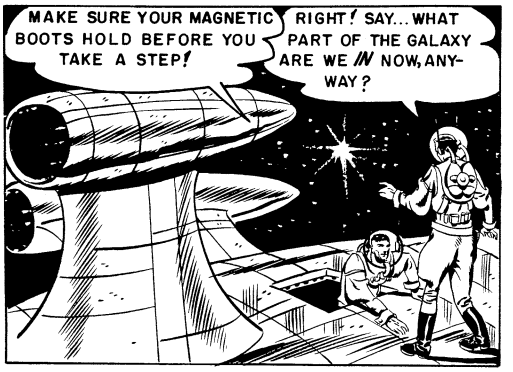


Martin L. Greim and Bob Cosgrove note in "Orlando Odyssey" (*Qua Brot* #1, 1985), "Joe's early solo work at EC was very similar to that of Wood's. The facial expressions, the inking technique, panel compositions and especially the construction of the figures and the clothes — all were Woodish. Orlando had learned much from Wood, but soon his inking style softened. In only a few issues, Orlando's personal style was instantly recognizable." In these pages, we can trace Orlando's developing "personal style" — we see Orlando ascending.

"A Mistake in Multiplication" (p. 1), Orlando's first work for EC, appeared in the September-October 1951 issue of *Weird Fantasy* the same month that Wallace Wood was declared "top man at *Weird Science!*" in that sister title. The story is dominated by heavy inking — darkness prevails — and the panel compositions are redolent of Wood's "beautiful clutter" period. But as EC historian Bill Spicer notes in *The Complete EC Library: The Complete Weird Fantasy*, Volume 2 (Russ Cochran, Publisher, 1980), "Orlando's style would soon lose its vaguely Wood-like characteristics and develop a look of its own."

"The Planetoid!" (p. 8) opens with a fantastic splash panel of two space-suited explorers on

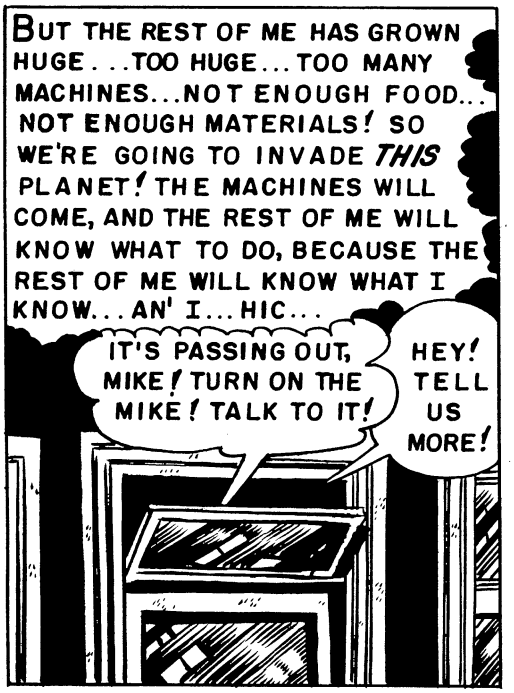
OPPOSITE: Joe Orlando drew himself fumbling with the camera Bill Gaines gave him at the 1951 EC Christmas party. "Glo" is Gloria, Joe's first wife, who also worked for EC and *Mad*.



the hull of their rocket ship (adapted for the cover of this book) and shows Orlando already lightening his style a bit and coming into his own. The plot twist turns on a theme that we will see revisited in this volume, as Orlando is increasingly given jobs that include extreme discrepancies in size relative to space travelers vs. Earthmen! The story was redrawn for 3D treatment by Al Williamson and George Evans and, although unpublished at the time, that version appears in *50 Girls 50 And Other Stories*, Volume 3 in this series.

"Not on the Menu" (p. 15) appears in the same issue of *Weird Fantasy* that includes this editorial note on the letters page: "Joe's meteoric rise in popularity with you readers has been most gratifying ... both to your happy editors and to Joe himself!" EC publisher Bill Gaines and editor Feldstein had good reason to be happy — Orlando was fast becoming an essential part of the EC science fiction magic, and readers had embraced him quickly. "Not on the Menu" has heavy doses of two Feldstein script staples: tragedy and irony, and Orlando's art, while not yet as "finished" looking as Wood's of the same period, displays his increasing comfort with inking — the lightening of his style is even more evident here.

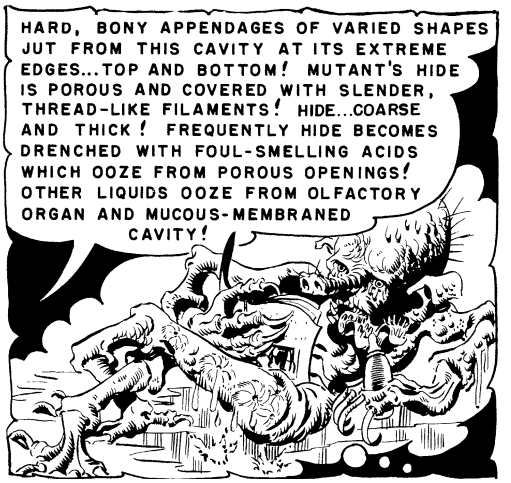
"Why Papa Left Home" (p. 22) joins a pantheon of EC stories that pushed hard at conventional envelopes — readers not wanting spoilers should skip this paragraph! EC explored the possibilities and permutations of time travel often, and here we delve into one of the most bizarre possible outcomes. Though Charles L. Harness's "Child by Chronos" has been cited as a possible inspiration for this story, that appeared in *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction* roughly a year and a half later, and Gaines was adamant that "Why Papa Left Home" was a wholly original plot, saying at the 1972 EC Fan-Addict Convention: "I'm proud ... there's one that was completely original. It was my idea, and I've never seen it anywhere else, or anything close to it. That's where the guy goes back in time and becomes his own father." While Gaines and Feldstein didn't shy from controversial topics, they limited the subject of incest to this single tale.

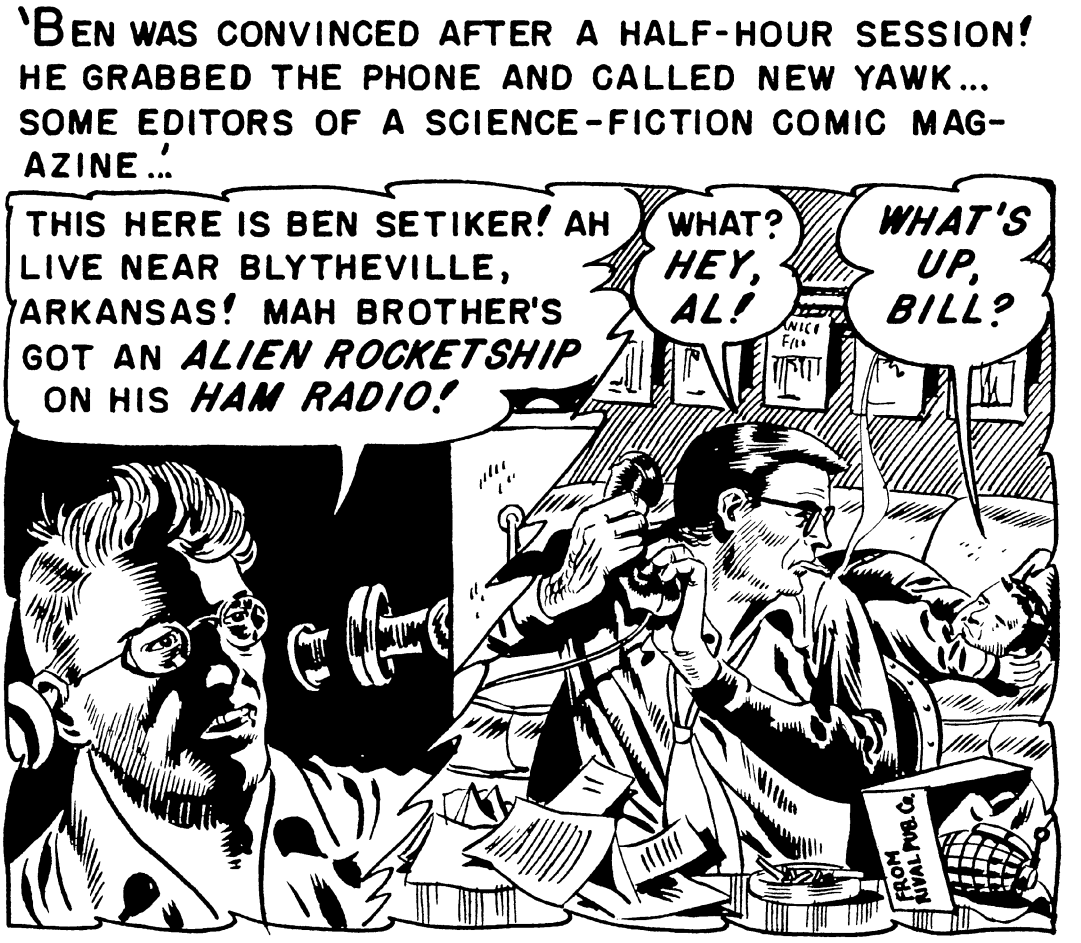

BUT THE REST OF ME HAS GROWN HUGE...TOO HUGE...TOO MANY MACHINES...NOT ENOUGH FOOD... NOT ENOUGH MATERIALS! SO WE'RE GOING TO INVADE THIS PLANET! THE MACHINES WILL COME, AND THE REST OF ME WILL KNOW WHAT TO DO, BECAUSE THE REST OF ME WILL KNOW WHAT I KNOW...AN' I...HIC...
IT'S PASSING OUT, MIKE! TURN ON THE MIKE! TALK TO IT!
HEY! TELL US MORE!

"The Worm Turns" (p. 28) is an early example of a house plot that Feldstein would turn to again and again, the type he described to Steven Ringgenberg in a 1994 interview published in *The Comics Journal Library Vol. 8: The EC Artists Part 1* (Fantagraphics, 2013) as "poetic justice kind of things. You-step-on-a-cockroach-and-a-cockroach-steps-on-you kind of thing." It's clear that Feldstein had fun with these types of stories (you will read other examples in this collection), and Orlando likewise clearly enjoyed illustrating them — his depictions of the alien creatures here are delightfully over the top!

"The Thing in the Jar" (p. 35) shows an increasing tendency for Orlando to be assigned the truly outrageous science fiction plots — his art gets ever more outlandish and frantic as Feldstein's plots become more fantastic. The plot inspiration was likely "The Liquid Life" by Ralph Milne Farley, a "springboard" handed to Feldstein by Gaines after an all-night reading session mining for story ideas. Though originally published in the October 1936 issue of *Thrilling Wonder Stories*, it's probable that Gaines read Farley's story in the 1946 Groff Conklin anthology *The Best of Science Fiction*. "The Thing in the Jar" has the dubious distinction of being one of the more egregious examples of Feldstein's overly wordy prose leaving little room for the artist — poor Orlando has scant space to draw through most of it, and page 6 (p. 40) sees his attempts to include art in the panels reach comical levels. Panel 7 *must* have been a rebellious statement. Orlando draws only the open transom over a door — it's all he had room for!

"The Monsters" (p. 42) appeared in the first issue of *Shock SuspenStories*, introduced as a "sampler" of EC's various genres. With only a


HARD, BONY APPENDAGES OF VARIED SHAPES JUT FROM THIS CAVITY AT ITS EXTREME EDGES...TOP AND BOTTOM! MUTANT'S HIDE IS POROUS AND COVERED WITH SLENDER, THREAD-LIKE FILAMENTS! HIDE...COARSE AND THICK! FREQUENTLY HIDE BECOMES DRENCHED WITH FOUL-SMELLING ACIDS WHICH OOZE FROM POROUS OPENINGS! OTHER LIQUIDS OOZE FROM OLFACTORY ORGAN AND MUCOUS-MEMBRANED CAVITY!


'BEN WAS CONVINCED AFTER A HALF-HOUR SESSION! HE GRABBED THE PHONE AND CALLED NEW YAWK... SOME EDITORS OF A SCIENCE-FICTION COMIC MAGAZINE...'
THIS HERE IS BEN SETIKER! AH LIVE NEAR BLYTHEVILLE, ARKANSAS! MAH BROTHER'S GOT AN ALIEN ROCKETSHIP ON HIS HAM RADIO!
WHAT? HEY, AL!
WHAT'S UP, BILL?
FROM RIVAL PUB. CO.

few exceptions, Orlando was chosen to illustrate the "Science-Fiction SuspenStory" offerings for that title (other examples can be found in *Judgment Day And Other Stories,* Volume 9). "The Monsters" of the story are described in excruciating detail, and the mental images conjured by the description are illustrated in disgusting detail by Orlando on page 4 (p. 45). After seeing the monsters revealed in the final panel, turn back to page 5 (p. 46) and note the lab rabbit in panel 4. The irony, given the dialog directly above it, is clear.

"Chewed Out!" (p. 48) is an EC classic that has been reprinted in multiple formats. (Its stature as a Gaines favorite is evidenced by its inclusion in the 1965 Ballantine Books collection, *Tales of the Incredible.*) Though its "springboard" sprang from an identifiable source, "Chewed Out!" is one of many EC stories that is superior to its inspiration. Based on "Pictures Don't Lie" by Katherine MacLean, published in the August 1951 issue of *Galaxy Science Fiction*, "Chewed Out!" simplifies certain plot elements, producing a more enjoyable yarn.

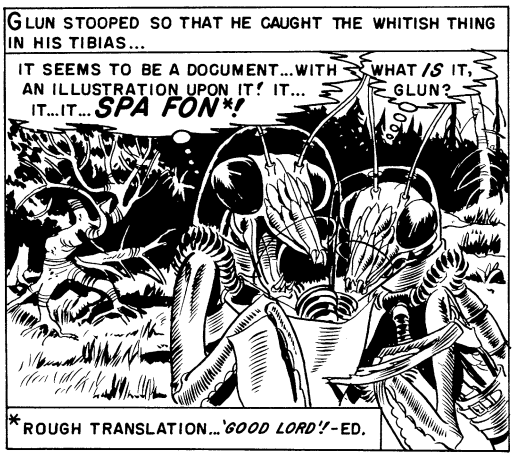
Where the MacLean story has a military radio decoder communicating with aliens by broadcasting Disney movies, Feldstein substitutes a rural ham radio operator who makes only audio contact with the aliens. The MacLean story is unclear as to the aliens' final landing spot, while Feldstein adds comical elements that make it all too clear in the final panel.

Feldstein appears as himself, along with Gaines, on page 4, panel 5 (p. 51), but that's not the only personal touch: his unflattering portrayals of the Arkansas characters, especially the military, were colored by his own experiences at the Blytheville Air Force Base

in the 1940s. "If a negative depiction came through in the writing, there was good cause," Feldstein recalled in 1980 (*The Complete EC Library: The Complete Weird Science*, Volume 2, second edition, Russ Cochran, Publisher). "I had many distasteful experiences there, including several episodes of anti-Semitism." The hot dogs were another personal touch — Gaines was crazy about them.

"A Man's Job!" (p. 55) is one of several Feldstein plots that explore the subject of gender reversal, and as progressive as it must have been in 1952, it's remarkable how comfortable Feldstein as writer and Orlando as artist seem to be with the idea of women taking over all aspects of politics and business. Many of the then-fantastical twists have since come to pass — predictive, as EC and, later, *Mad* were to be — but it's a bit sobering to note that Feldstein had a female U.S. president elected in 1960 while a real-life female *vice* president wasn't sworn in until 2021! Orlando has a lot of fun with the story, and it's fun to watch his portrayals of accepted gender stereotypes morph as the story unfolds. The twist ending, which comes

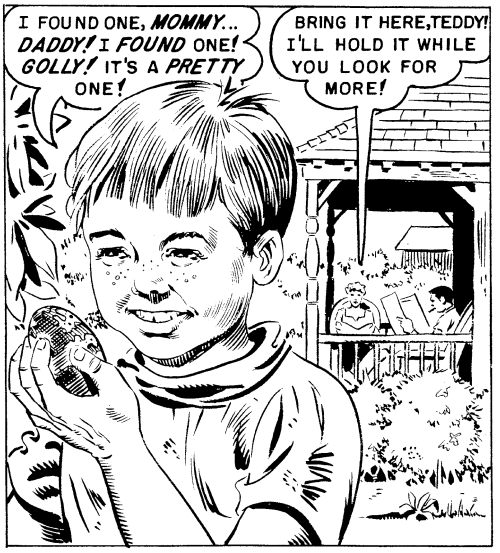
...THE MEN STAYED HOME!
JUST WAIT TILL YOUR MOTHER COMES HOME, YOUNG MAN!
PLEASE, DADDY! I WON'T DO IT AGAIN...I PROMISE! DON'T TELL MOMMY! SHE'LL SPANK ME!


GLUN STOOPED SO THAT HE CAUGHT THE WHITISH THING IN HIS TIBIAS...
IT SEEMS TO BE A DOCUMENT...WITH AN ILLUSTRATION UPON IT! IT... IT...IT...SPA FON*!
WHAT IS IT, GLUN?
*ROUGH TRANSLATION..."GOOD LORD!"-ED.

off as a lame punch line, isn't much of a twist after all the role-reversing of the previous pages, but getting there is half the fun, and "A Man's Job!" stands tall among EC's "off the beaten path" science fiction fare.

"Say Your Prayers" (p. 62) is a wonderful example of the EC "humorous" science fiction story. These were often illustrated by Harvey Kurtzman or Jack Kamen (see *Man and Superman And Other Stories*, Volume 27 and *The Martian Monster And Other Stories*, Volume 24 for examples), but here Orlando ably demonstrates why he was a natural for the EC humor comic, *Panic* (see *The Thing From The Grave And Other Stories*, Volume 19) and, later, *Mad* magazine. (Even later — decades — Orlando would be named associate publisher of the magazine, which by then was an American institution.)

The story leads logically to its tongue-in-cheek ending, with its Praying Mantis–like aliens scouting, and then abandoning, the colonization of Earth. The story closely follows the plot of Anthony Boucher's "Expedition" published in *Thrilling Wonder Stories* (August 1943) and included in the 1946 Groff Conklin anthology *The Best of Science Fiction* (a favorite of Gaines's). Both are told in the form of translated alien transmissions, and both turn on the discovery of a disturbing photograph, but Feldstein again improves on the source by simplifying the trajectory. Incidentally, translation is provided for some legendary EC geek speak on page 6, panel 2 (p. 67) and again on page 7, panel 4 (p. 68)!



"Don't Count Your Chickens..." (p. 69) is the rare EC Easter story — the only other example is "Practical Yolk!" illustrated by Jack Kamen (see *Daddy Lost His Head And Other Stories*, Volume 20), and both concern unusual eggs! When the little boy in the first panel finds an oddly colored egg, his mother knows that it isn't one she and his father hid. Assuming it's a neighbor's egg, the parents let their son keep it. But when the glowing egg starts talking to the boy — well, we know this is an EC story! Orlando has, by this time, established his own distinct style, with little of the "Woodish" influence noted in his earlier work. The ending recalls the earlier "A Mistake in Multiplication!"

"The Big Stand-Up!" (p. 76) shares a common theme with "The Planetoid" and "Chewed Out!" but to reveal which one would give away the snap ending. EC often returned to the theme of doomed love affairs, and figuring out how the romance would go awry is part of the fun. The splash panel almost reveals the ending, but rest assured this isn't the kind of "stand-up" a hapless suitor might be used to. Though he has developed his own distinct style, the influence of Orlando's mentor is still strong here: main character Bart Thompson is a caricature of Wallace Wood!

"They Shall Inherit" (p. 82) is a well-written tale with two interweaving plots: a pair of scientists use a government nuclear facility to develop a time machine, while in the same facility the "Chem Warfare Division" has trouble controlling the rat population. The two storylines converge, leading us to an imaginative and comical conclusion. Feldstein liked this final panel snap ending so much that he recycled it for "The Arrival," illustrated by Al Williamson, less than a year later (see *50 Girls 50 And Other Stories*, Volume 3).

THAT'S RIGHT! AND I'M ON THE THIRD..EARTH! SAY! IS THIS A JOKE OR ISN'T IT?
THIS IS NO JOKE, BART THOMPSON... STATION WZYR-TV...SALARY $73.50 PER! WE ARE EIGHTY LIGHT YEARS APART!

ALL CLEAR! LEAKAGE NOW STOPPED! ONLY PERSONNEL LOCATED IN AREA 69-B NEED REPORT FOR DECON-TAMINATION AS RADIATION WAS NOT WIDESPREAD...

"The Expert!" (p. 89) and "The Ad!" (p. 93) are a pair of "E.C. Quickies" (a recurring feature) that explores how Gaines and Feldstein got the "straight dope" on Mars. Notable are the accurate depictions of Bill Gaines's offices, complete with GhouLunatics (the catch-all nickname for EC's "horror hosts") paintings on the walls, and the liberal peppering of the story with EC in-jokes. Both "quickies" are played strictly for laughs, and Orlando's loose, frantic art suggests the lampoons he would soon be illustrating for EC's own *Mad* imitation, *Panic* (see *The Thing From The Grave And Other Stories*, Volume 19 for those)! It's interesting to note Feldstein talking about a "documentary ... really authentic ... 'Special Issue'" in the first two panels of page 2 of "The Expert!" (p. 89). EC did eventually do such a "Special Issue" on flying saucers — and it's included in this collection as a bonus.

"Strictly Business" (p. 96) finds Orlando's personal style positively blooming — though traces of Wood remain, the more delicate linework, the panel compositions, and certainly the faces of the characters are all uniquely Orlando's. His ability to draw gorgeous women is also becoming a particular strength — look at page 5, panel 6 (p. 100): Dianne's transparent outfit sees Orlando essentially drawing her completely nude, if only in silhouette. Though the plot is one of many

YES, DIANNE WAS UNHAPPY! SHE HAD FALLEN IN LOVE WITH HER HUSBAND! AT FIRST IT HAD BEEN GRAND! CLOTHES, JEWELRY, EVERYTHING A WOMAN COULD WANT! EVERYTHING, THAT IS, EXCEPT ALEC...THE ONE THING DIANNE WANTED...
GOOD-NIGHT, DIANNE! SEE YOU IN THE MORNING!
ALEC! I... I... COME HERE A MOMENT, PLEASE!

where the entire story seems written around the final panel, it's an enjoyable one, and the snap ending can't be guessed by any foreshadowing.

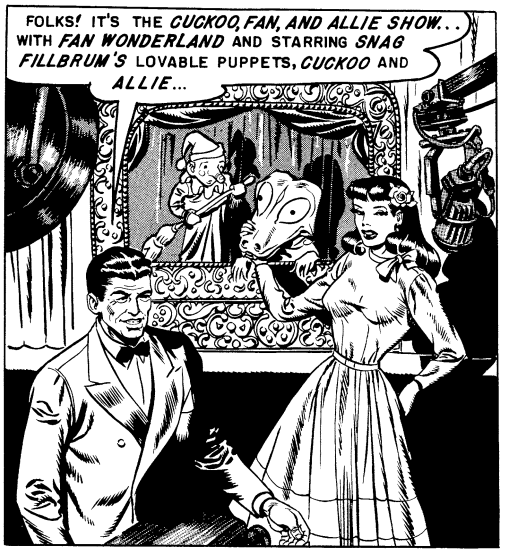
"Bum Steer!" (p. 102) is yet another Feldstein "poetic justice" plot, but it's interesting in that after five intriguing pages, the entire setup is revealed before a final panel that comes as no surprise. After all the foreshadowing Feldstein does on pages 6 and 7 (p. 107, 108), a snappier twist would have been a roomful of lust-crazed "dames"! But the story holds up as an example of EC's "animal rights" yarns, and Orlando's ever-improving art makes up for any of the "house plot" shortcomings. One wonders how much repeated readings of Feldstein's "you-step-on-a-cockroach ..." types of stories might have influenced generations of animal lovers. The bottom two panels of page 6 (p. 107) surely caused a few readers to at least consider vegetarianism!

'YOU KNOW WHAT A DECOY IS? IT'S A STEER WHAT'S TRAINED TO LEAD THEM DUMB COWS UP THE RAMP INTO THE SLAUGHTERHOUSE...'
LOOKIT THEM GO...LIKE THEY WUZ BLIND... FOLLOWIN' THAT DECOY TO THEIR DOOM!

"Revulsion!" (p. 109) opens with a frankly stunning large splash panel of a hideous winged alien creature bearing down on two men in what appears to be a jungle, the hull of a crashed rocket ship in the background. The splash is unfortunately the high point, for the story that follows is a by-the-numbers Feldstein sci-fi job. One might be forgiven for assuming that this one was plotted on an off-day when Feldstein was running dry on ideas, but Orlando's art carries the story, and his alien creatures are admirably rendered. The laughably outlandish final page serves to confirm that Feldstein was often up against a deadline and writing around the final panel, but in this case the foreshadowing is loud and clear.

"What Fur?!" (p. 117) is unquestionably one of the most heavy-handed of the EC "animal rights" stories, so much so that it's title could well have been "*Anti*-Fur!" The main character's description of the fur trade as "nauseating," "cruel," and "evil" reflects at least some level of Feldstein's personal feelings about animal abuse, and, as beautiful as he draws the astronaut's wife, Orlando manages to make her skunk furs look unappealing. The fact that Feldstein lived out his golden years on an animal rescue ranch suggests that stories such as "What Fur?!" probably indicated a lifelong compassion toward animals. The final panel is one of the more shocking in the Orlando oeuvre.

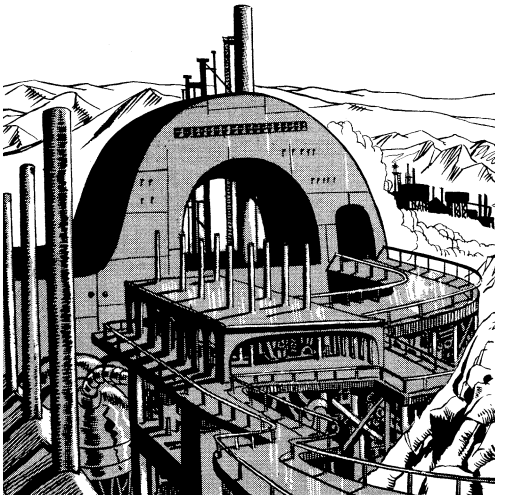
THIS FUR SCARF?!
THE WHOLE IDEA...FUR COATS... FUR SCARFS...STOLES...CAPES! IT'S NAUSEATING! YOU TRAP SOME HELPLESS ANIMAL...SKIN IT...AND DRAPE IT AROUND A WOMAN'S NECK...


FOLKS! IT'S THE CUCKOO, FAN, AND ALLIE SHOW.. WITH FAN WONDERLAND AND STARRING SNAG FILLBRUM'S LOVABLE PUPPETS, CUCKOO AND ALLIE...

"The People's Choice!" (p. 123) is a barbed political satire that parodies the popular *Kukla, Fran and Ollie* TV show that ran from 1947 to 1957. The "springboard" was suggested by EC fan Larry Stark (named "EC's Number One Fan" by Bill Gaines) who, in a September 2015 email to this author, recalled:

> 1952 was a rather unique point in our history: for the previous 20 years, there had been a sitting president — F.D.R., and then Harry Truman [running for re-election] — but Truman decided that Washington had been right, two terms were enough for any man and for any country. So both parties looked for 'Someone New.' The idea was so interesting that other people got into the act. In the newspapers, Pogo Possum was urged to run — and might have, except that when the Okefenokee steamship took all the critturs from the swamp to the convention, one forgotten soul was left, sleeping, behind: Pogo himself.[1]
>
> On television, Oliver J. Dragon on the *Kukla, Fran and Ollie* program also ran. And in one of my early sorties into politics, I became a champion of the hand puppet. I wrote a lot of letters in those days and typed across the back of every envelope the cry: 'OLIVER J. DRAGON for PRESIDENT!!!!'
>
> Apparently, when Bill and Al were stumped for a new idea, they used that as a 'springboard.' Their story suggested that during a very unpopular presidential race, a hand puppet declared for the office, and Allie K. Gator was looked on as a sort of 'protest alternative' to the stuffed shirts the two major parties presented — and so Allie got elected! But you know the quick-ending EC style — instead of a hand puppet, he was really an alien; so the very final panel had the Senate all raising their newly invaded right arms, and a sea of hand-puppets voted in laws by acclamation.
>
> It was a strain on credulity, and a standard house plot. However, it does give a clue as to how those stories came into being, doesn't it?

"Mass Meeting" (p. 130) finds Orlando crafting an impressive splash page dominated by machinery, and while otherworldly gadgetry is an undisputed specialty of Wood's, this bears none of his influence — it is completely Orlando's own style. The story is wonderfully imaginative and written so well that its utterly implausible plot points read as logical, almost believable.



[1] *Pogo: Bona Fide Balderdash, The Complete Syndicated Comic Strips, Volume 2, 1951–1952* by Walt Kelly, Fantagraphics Books, 2012.

Though inspired by Malcolm Jameson's "Tricky Tonnage" (*Astounding Science Fiction*, December 1944), it is another Feldstein plot that improves greatly on its springboard source. The Jameson story has a science fiction fan and amateur inventor discovering a way to conduct gravity for "weight shifting" and utilizing the method for profit. Feldstein takes the basics of the "weight shifting" racket and provides a much more interesting and complex narrative to necessitate its for-profit use. While there are dire consequences in the Jameson tale (lawsuits, accidents, natural disasters), they are nowhere near as cataclysmic as what Feldstein dreams up!

"The Green Thing!" (p. 138) bears an unsubtle title, given that the ability of its title alien to inhabit and take over living things was likely suggested by the 1951 science fiction film *The Thing*. It's also possible that the story *The Thing* was based on — "Who Goes There?" by John W. Campbell Jr. — was the inspiration for "The Green Thing," given Gaines's appetite for all-night pulp reading. (Campbell's story originally appeared in *Astounding Science Fiction*, August 1938, and has been reprinted multiple times). The EC version is greatly simplified but effectively told, with a spacecraft crashing near a farm and the title "Thing" taking over first a dog ("The Thing" of Campbell's story also inhabited a dog), then a horse, and, finally, a human — but which one?

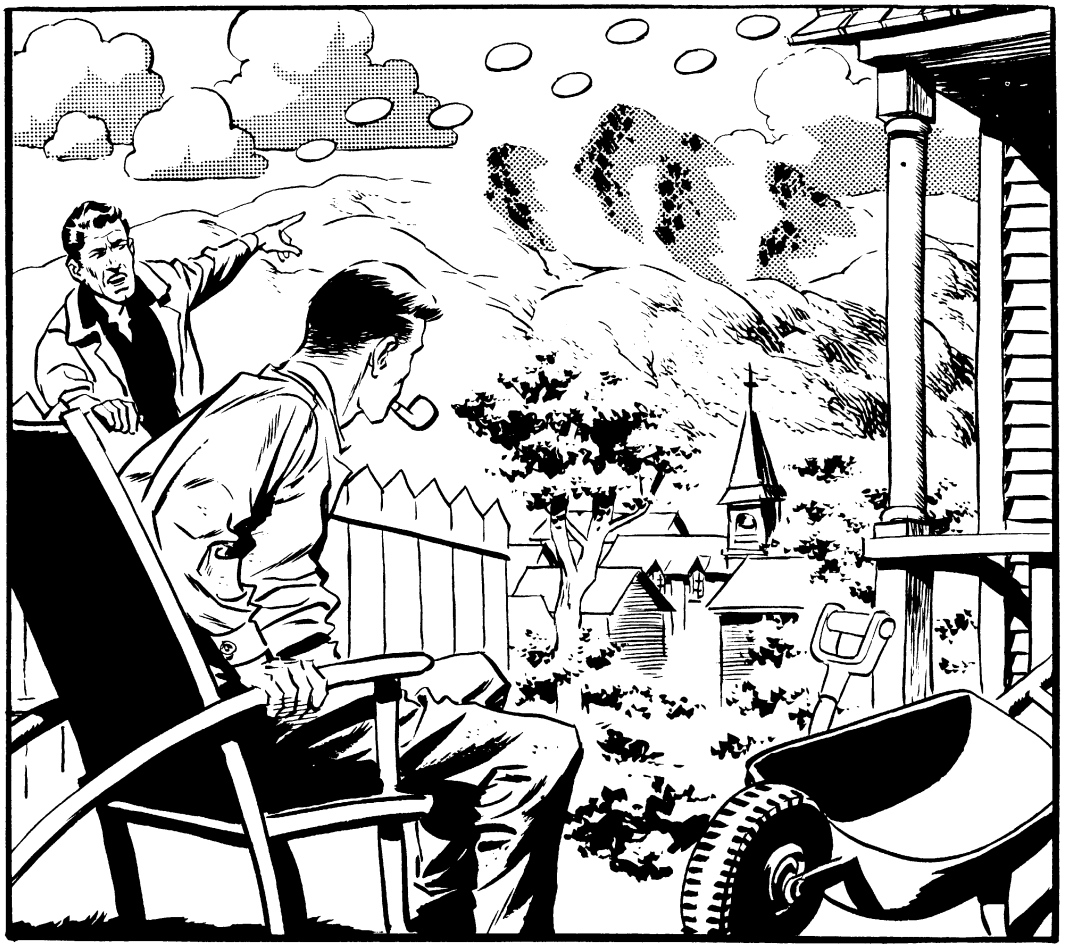
Feldstein adds some imaginative flourishes such as the "Thing" turning whatever it inhabits green and then rendering the farm folk colorblind, so they won't know where it is. The twist

RECOMMISSION HIM! HE MIGHT FIND HIS MISTAKE AND FIGURE OUR LOCATION! FRANKLY, I'M WORRIED! WE ONLY HAVE TWO MONTHS' OXYGEN SUPPLY LEFT! SUPPOSE GOOGAN CAN'T LOCATE US! THEN WHAT? WE JUST CAN'T WANDER AROUND TILL THE OXYGEN GIVES OUT!
AND I CAN'T RECOMMISSION ARDEN! WHY, THE CREW WILL THINK I'VE GONE SOFT!

ending (foreshadowed in the first few panels) is imaginative but also heartbreaking.

"Not So Tough!" (p. 145) is a great example of a device Feldstein used many times as a set-up for a twist: some part of a character's identity — a personality quirk or physical trait — is the basis for an ironic comeuppance (i.e. someone who doesn't "use their head" being decapitated, or someone who acts like a "big man" being stretched on a rack). In this case, the "tough guy" commander of a rocket ship is too "hard" on his crew, with one predicting more than once that he will "soften up" someday. Half of the fun of reading these types of EC stories is trying to guess how a character will meet his fate based on the clues dropped throughout the story, and "Not So Tough!" doesn't disappoint. The ironic ending spares no gore, and it's easy to see here why EC horror readers also enjoyed the science fiction stories!

In this volume, we can see Joe Orlando growing and developing his own uniquely recognizable style at EC. To see where he went from here, pick up a copy of *Judgment Day And Other Stories*, Volume 9, for his later EC science fiction work. To complete the picture, we have included here, as a bonus, the entire contents of the "Flying Saucer Report" issue of *Weird Science-Fantasy* (more on that later), which was divided among Orlando, Wood, George Evans, and Reed Crandall. Orlando reflected on this issue after Gaines spoke about it at the EC Fan-Addict Convention in 1972, saying: "I think I particularly wanted flying saucers to be true



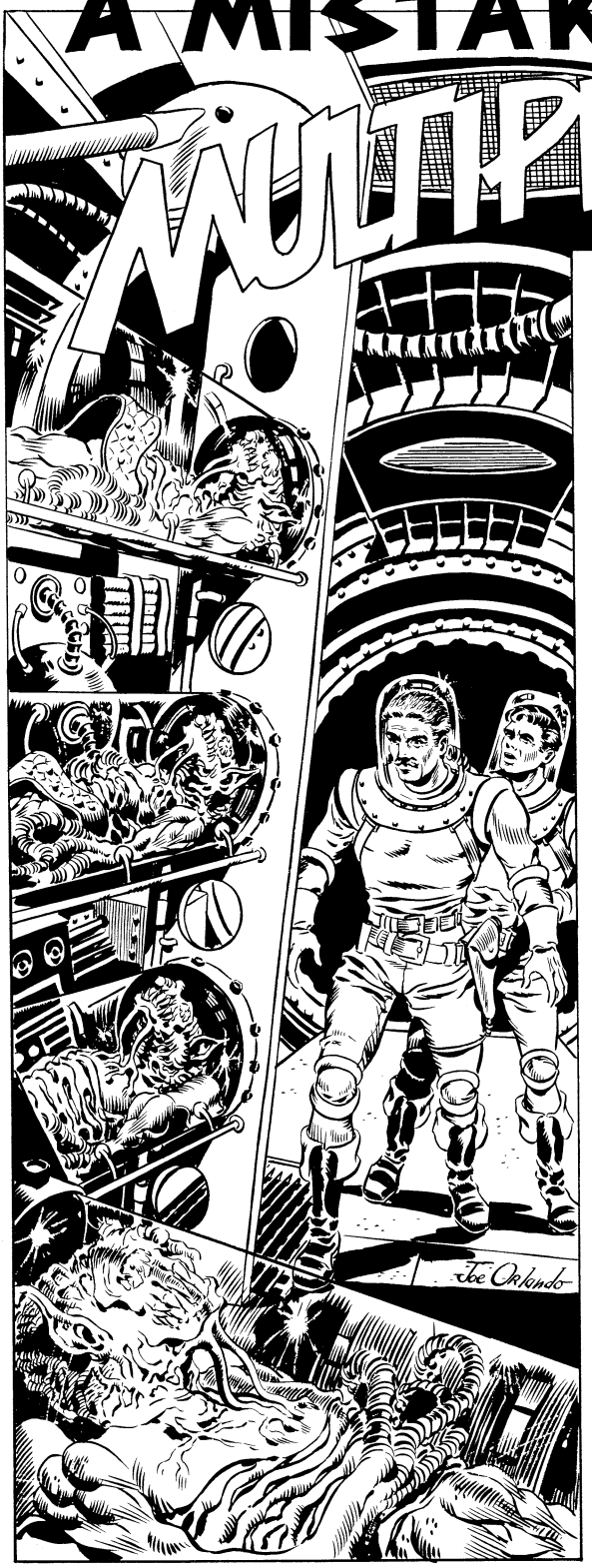
because I envisioned many, many changes in our society once they landed. It would shake up our religious beliefs and our political beliefs. Fortunately, those changes did come about, but they didn't come from heaven."

Orlando arguably did more than any other EC artist to keep the spirit of EC alive throughout his career. As well as contributing to Warren Publishing's *Creepy*, *Eerie*, and *Blazing Combat* in the 1960s, he was instrumental in getting many of the other EC artists on board, and when he moved to DC Comics in the late 1960s, he revamped their mystery titles, creating hosts, à la the EC GhouLunatics, adding horror elements, and again recruiting his fellow EC artists to contribute. Speaking of the GhouLunatics, Orlando did five new drawings of them for the 1971 Nostalgia Press collection *The EC Horror Library* (a.k.a *Horror Comics of the 1950s*). In the 1990s, Orlando ultimately ended up almost where he had started — at EC Publications (now under the DC Comics umbrella) as associate publisher of *Mad*. The stories you're about to read is where it all began!

THOMMY BURNS *is the founding administrator of the EC Fan-Addict Club on Facebook and often moderates or participates on EC-oriented panels at comic book conventions. He appears frequently as a guest speaker on pop culture and comics-related podcasts and livestreams, and he co-hosts the EC Fan-Addict Podcast and YouTube channel.*

He also provides detailed commentaries for The Fantagraphics EC Artists' Library *series and has written about EC Comics in* Home to Stay: The Complete EC Ray Bradbury Stories, The Life and Legend of Wallace Wood Volume 1, The Comics Journal Library Volume 10: The EC Artists Part 2 *(all from Fantagraphics), and* The EC Covers Artists Edition *(IDW). He lives in Southern California.*

A MISTAKE IN MULTIPLICATION

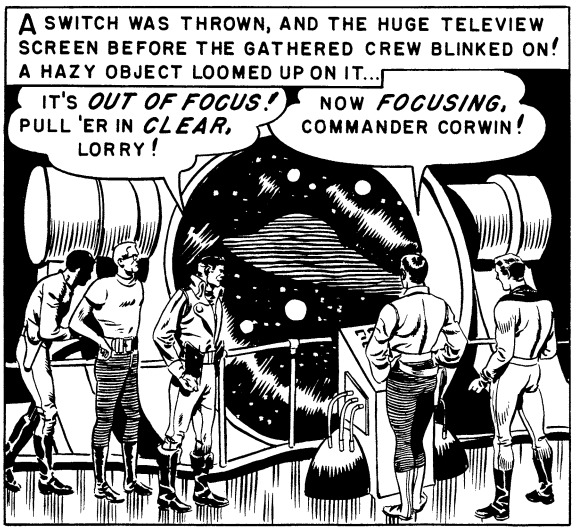


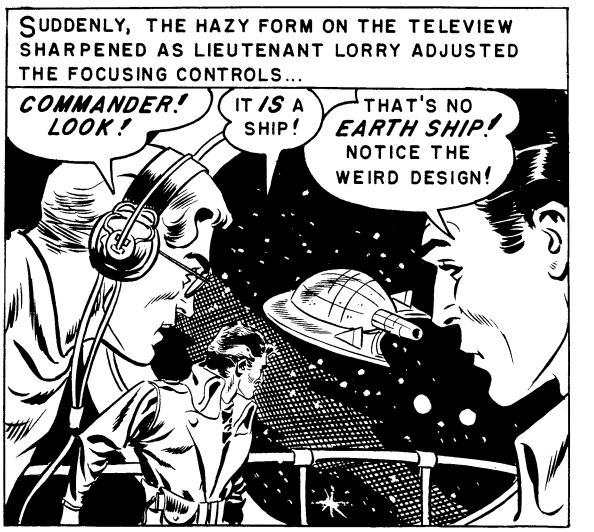
THE CREW OF THE GALAXY EXPLORATION ROCKET SHIP STARED IN FASCINATION AT THE YELLOW-GREEN GLOW ON THE RADAR SCREEN AS THE STEADY BEEP-BEEP OF THE WARNING DEVICE INCREASED IN VOLUME...

WHAT DO YOU SUPPOSE IT *IS*, COMMANDER? IT *CAN'T BE ANOTHER SHIP!*
I DON'T KNOW, LORRY! THIS IS AN *UNEXPLORED REGION* OF THE *GALAXY!* *NO OTHER EARTH SHIP* HAS *EVER BEEN HERE* TO MY KNOWLEDGE...

THE RADAR OPERATOR SCANNED A ROW OF DIALS BEFORE HIM, CONSULTED A CHART, AND ANNOUNCED...

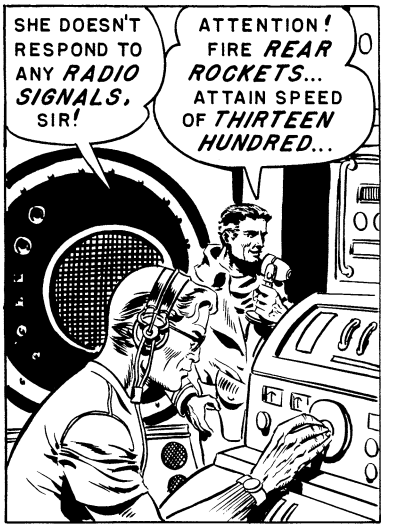
IT'S ABOUT THREE HUNDRED MILES OFF NOW, COMMANDER!
THEN IT'S IN RANGE OF THE *TELEVIEW!* SWITCH IT ON, LORRY! *TELESCOPIC* SETTING... *SIX HUNDRED MAGNIFICATIONS...*
RIGHT!
1


A SWITCH WAS THROWN, AND THE HUGE TELEVIEW SCREEN BEFORE THE GATHERED CREW BLINKED ON! A HAZY OBJECT LOOMED UP ON IT...
IT'S OUT OF FOCUS! PULL 'ER IN CLEAR, LORRY!
NOW FOCUSING, COMMANDER CORWIN!


SUDDENLY, THE HAZY FORM ON THE TELEVIEW SHARPENED AS LIEUTENANT LORRY ADJUSTED THE FOCUSING CONTROLS...
COMMANDER! LOOK!
IT IS A SHIP!
THAT'S NO EARTH SHIP! NOTICE THE WEIRD DESIGN!

COMMANDER CORWIN BARKED AN ORDER INTO THE INTERCOM...
FIRE FORWARD ROCKET TUBES! WE'RE STOPPING!
COMMANDER! THAT SHIP IS IN A SLOW FREE FALL!

WHAT'S HER SPEED?
ABOUT ONE THOUSAND! SHE'S DRIFTING IN THE GENERAL DIRECTION OF OUR SOLAR SYSTEM!
WE'VE GOT TO STOP HER!


SHE DOESN'T RESPOND TO ANY RADIO SIGNALS, SIR!
ATTENTION! FIRE REAR ROCKETS... ATTAIN SPEED OF THIRTEEN HUNDRED...

SOON, COMMANDER CORWIN'S GALAXY EXPLORATION SHIP PULLED UP ALONGSIDE OF THE ALIEN SHIP...
ALL RIGHT! FIRE FORWARD ROCKETS! SLOW SHIP TO ONE THOUSAND! WE'RE GOING INTO THE SAME FREE-FALL SPEED...
ARE WE GOING TO BOARD HER, COMMANDER CORWIN?

THAT'S RIGHT, LIEUTENANT! GET INTO YOUR SPACESUIT! WE'LL SEE WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT...
YES, SIR! RIGHT AWAY, SIR!
SHE DOESN'T SHOW ANY SIGN OF LIFE, SIR! SHE'S IGNORING US!
2

THEN THE AIRLOCK DOOR ON THE EARTH SHIP OPENED, AND COMMANDER CORWIN AND LIEUTENANT LORRY EMERGED OUT ONTO THE GLEAMING HULL...
GOT THAT TOOL KIT, LORRY?
YES, SIR!
COMMANDER CORWIN SET UP A CANNON-LIKE WEAPON ON A TRIPOD AND POINTED IT AT THE ALIEN SHIP! THEN HE TOOK A ROUND MAGNET TIED TO A LONG COIL OF WIRE AND LOADED IT INTO THE MUZZLE...
IF THAT SHIP IS METAL, THE MAGNET WILL CLING TO IT!
THE MAGNET SHOT OUT ACROSS SPACE AND STRUCK THE SIDE OF THE ALIEN SHIP! IT CLUNG THERE! COMMANDER CORWIN PULLED THE WIRE TIGHT AND FASTENED IT TO THE EARTH SHIP...
NOW WE HAVE A WIRE BRIDGE BETWEEN THE TWO SHIPS THAT WE CAN USE TO CROSS OVER WITH...
FINALLY, THE TWO SPACESUIT-CLAD EARTHMEN REACHED THE ALIEN SPACESHIP...
THE PORT IS SEALED, COMMANDER! HOW DO WE GET IN?
THERE'S AN OXY-ALUMINUM TORCH IN THE TOOL KIT...
USING THE OXY-ALUMINUM TORCH, LIEUTENANT LORRY CUT A SMALL OPENING IN THE HULL...
ALL RIGHT, LORRY! THAT'S BIG ENOUGH!
STILL NO SIGN OF LIFE, SIR! LOOKS LIKE THIS SHIP'S BEEN ABANDONED!
COMMANDER CORWIN AND HIS COMPANION SQUEEZED THROUGH THE OPENING THEY HAD CUT IN THE SIDE OF THE ALIEN SHIP AND GAZED ABOUT THEM...
YES! THIS IS DEFINITELY NOT AN EARTH SHIP! LOOK AT THE INSTRUMENTS AND CONTROL PANELS...
THEY'RE INSCRIBED WITH STRANGE CHARACTERS! MUST BE THEIR LANGUAGE...
CAUTIOUSLY, THEY MOVED THROUGH THE SHIP...
YOU'RE RIGHT, LORRY! IT DOES LOOK LIKE THE SHIP'S BEEN ABANDONED!
WAIT A MINUTE, COMMANDER! LOOK AT THIS! THERE'S ANOTHER COMPARTMENT BEHIND THIS AIRLOCK!
3

COMMANDER CORWIN FOLLOWED LIEUTENANT LORRY INTO THE COMPARTMENT THAT HE HAD OPENED! LINING THE WALLS FROM FLOOR TO CEILING WERE ABOUT A DOZEN TRANSPARENT CYLINDERS...

THERE'S *SOMETHING IN EACH OF THEM!*

CREATURES! WEIRD CREATURES! THEY LOOK... *DEAD!*

OPEN ONE OF THEM, LORRY! I'D LIKE TO GET A BETTER LOOK...

RIGHT!

LIEUTENANT LORRY OPENED ONE OF THE CYLINDERS, AND THE TWO EARTHMEN STUDIED ITS WEIRD OCCUPANT...

COMMANDER! IT'S MOVING!

IT'S *ALIVE!*

THE HIDEOUS LITTLE MONSTER SPRANG FROM ITS RESTING PLACE AND ATTACKED THE LIEUTENANT...

IT'S *ATTACKING* ME! *KILL IT, SIR! KILL IT!*

COMMANDER CORWIN DREW HIS PLUTONIUM PISTOL AND FIRED...

THE BLAST DEMOLISHED THE SAVAGE CREATURE...

THANKS, COMMANDER! THE THING ALMOST TORE OPEN MY SPACESUIT!

IF IT HAD, YOU WOULD HAVE BEEN DONE FOR! YOU'D NEVER HAVE BEEN ABLE TO GET BACK TO OUR SHIP!

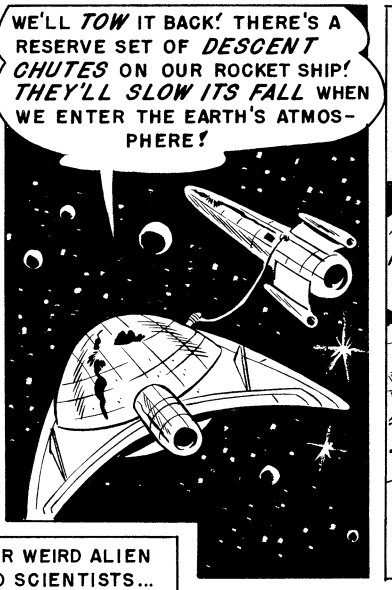
CORWIN TURNED TO THE OTHER CYLINDERS...

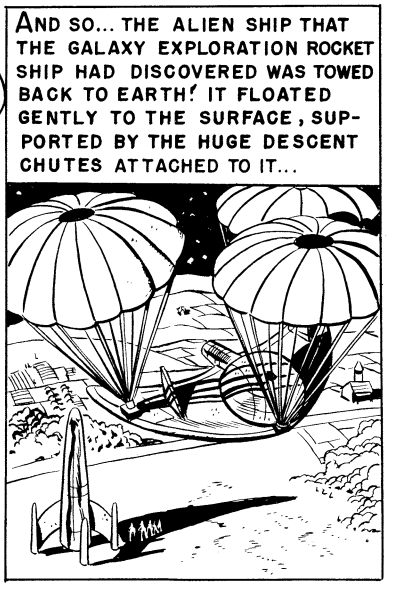
THESE THINGS ARE IN A FORM OF SUSPENDED ANIMATION! THEY'RE STILL ALIVE!

...AND DANGEROUS! WHAT DO WE DO NOW, SIR?

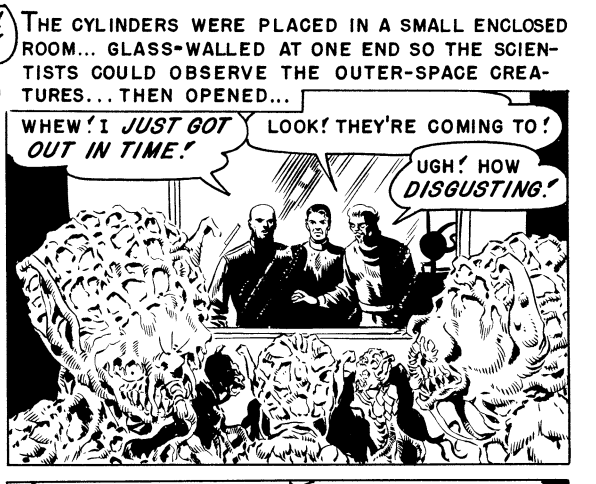
4

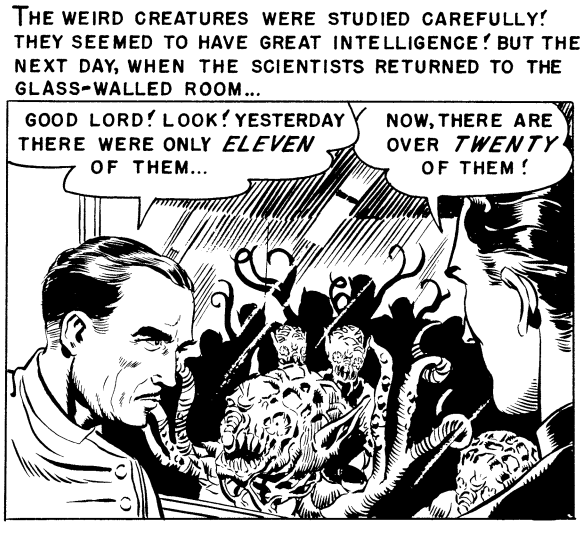
WE'RE GOING TO BRING THIS SHIP BACK TO EARTH, LORRY!
BACK TO EARTH, SIR? HOW?

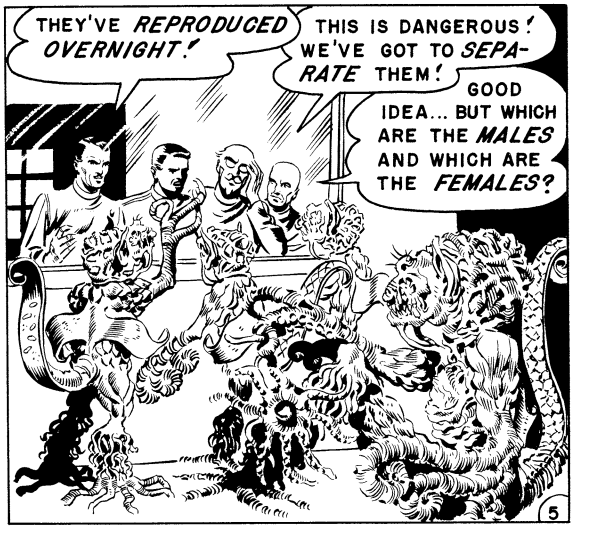

WE'LL TOW IT BACK! THERE'S A RESERVE SET OF DESCENT CHUTES ON OUR ROCKET SHIP! THEY'LL SLOW ITS FALL WHEN WE ENTER THE EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE!


AND SO... THE ALIEN SHIP THAT THE GALAXY EXPLORATION ROCKET SHIP HAD DISCOVERED WAS TOWED BACK TO EARTH! IT FLOATED GENTLY TO THE SURFACE, SUPPORTED BY THE HUGE DESCENT CHUTES ATTACHED TO IT...

THE STRANGE CYLINDERS WITH THEIR WEIRD ALIEN OCCUPANTS WERE TURNED OVER TO SCIENTISTS...
THIS IS A STUPENDOUS FIND, COMMANDER CORWIN! THE FIRST LIVING CREATURES DISCOVERED IN OUR GALAXY OUTSIDE OF EARTH!
REMEMBER, DOCTOR! THEY'RE SAVAGE! WHEN YOU REVIVE THEM... BE CAREFUL!


THE CYLINDERS WERE PLACED IN A SMALL ENCLOSED ROOM... GLASS-WALLED AT ONE END SO THE SCIENTISTS COULD OBSERVE THE OUTER-SPACE CREATURES... THEN OPENED...
WHEW! I JUST GOT OUT IN TIME!
LOOK! THEY'RE COMING TO!
UGH! HOW DISGUSTING!


THE WEIRD CREATURES WERE STUDIED CAREFULLY! THEY SEEMED TO HAVE GREAT INTELLIGENCE! BUT THE NEXT DAY, WHEN THE SCIENTISTS RETURNED TO THE GLASS-WALLED ROOM...
GOOD LORD! LOOK! YESTERDAY THERE WERE ONLY ELEVEN OF THEM...
NOW, THERE ARE OVER TWENTY OF THEM!


THEY'VE REPRODUCED OVERNIGHT!
THIS IS DANGEROUS! WE'VE GOT TO SEPARATE THEM!
GOOD IDEA... BUT WHICH ARE THE MALES AND WHICH ARE THE FEMALES?
5

HMMM! WELL, THERE'S ONLY ONE THING TO DO! *CONFINE EACH ONE BY ITSELF!* WE'LL SHIP THEM AROUND THE COUNTRY!
...TO DIFFERENT UNIVERSITIES AND SCIENTIFIC FOUNDATIONS!

AND SO THE WEIRD CREATURES WERE EACH CAGED AND SHIPPED TO VARIOUS CITIES! AT A MIDWESTERN UNIVERSITY...

HIGH UP OVER THE ROCKIES, A CROSS-CONTINENTAL JET CARGO PLANE CARRYING ONE OF THE MONSTERS RAN INTO A FREAK STORM.

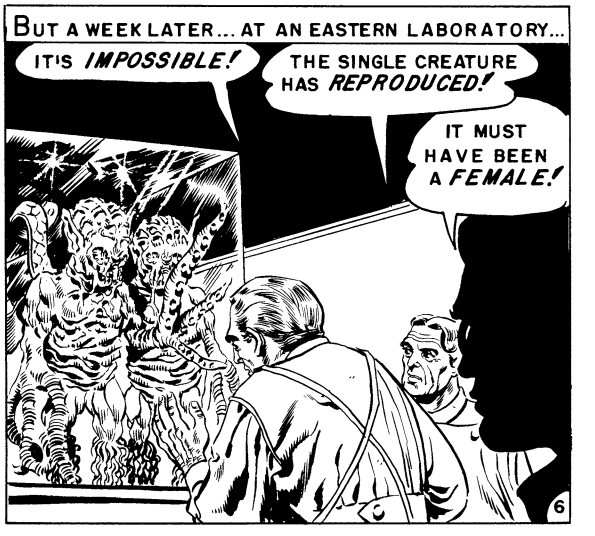
THE ABANDONED AIRCRAFT LOST ALTITUDE RAPIDLY...FINALLY CRASHING INTO A MOUNTAINSIDE...

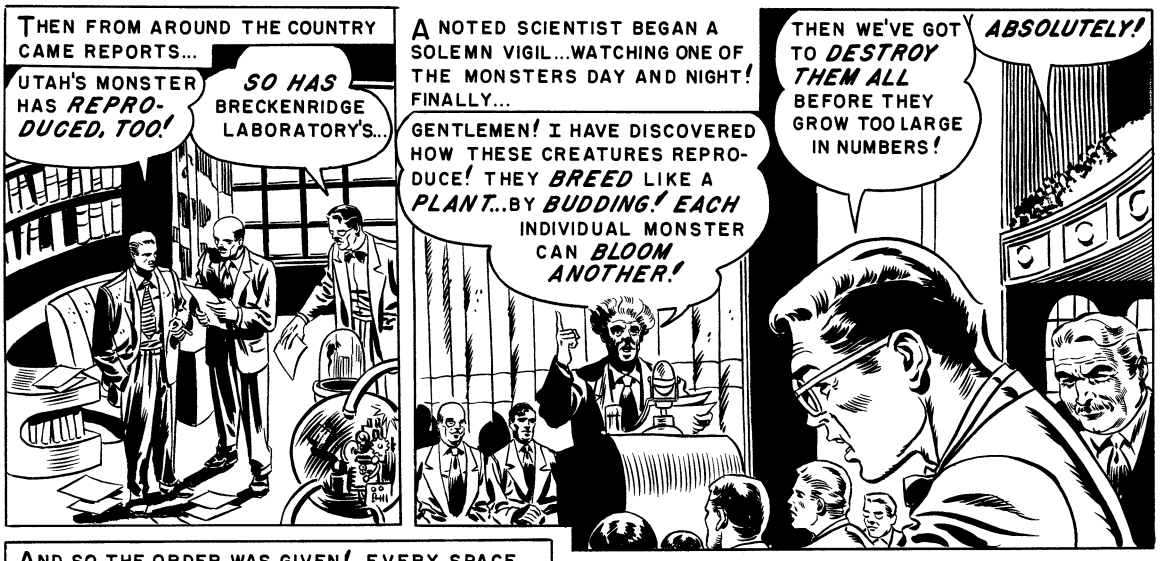
AMID THE WRECKAGE...THERE WAS A MOVEMENT! THE SPACE MONSTER WAS STILL ALIVE! IT CREPT FROM ITS DAMAGED SHIPPING CAGE...

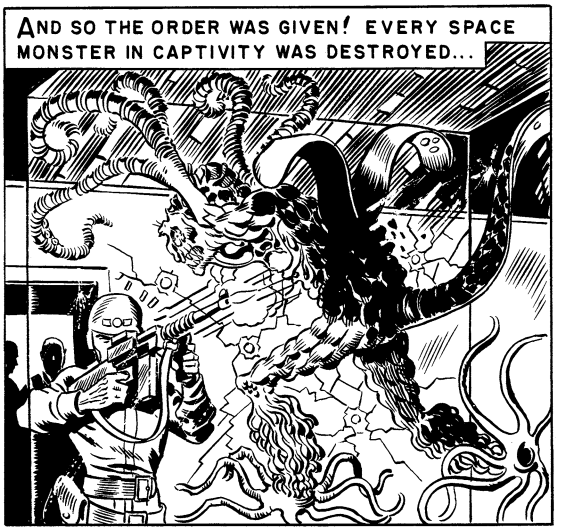
WHEN THE INVESTIGATING PARTY REACHED THE SCENE...

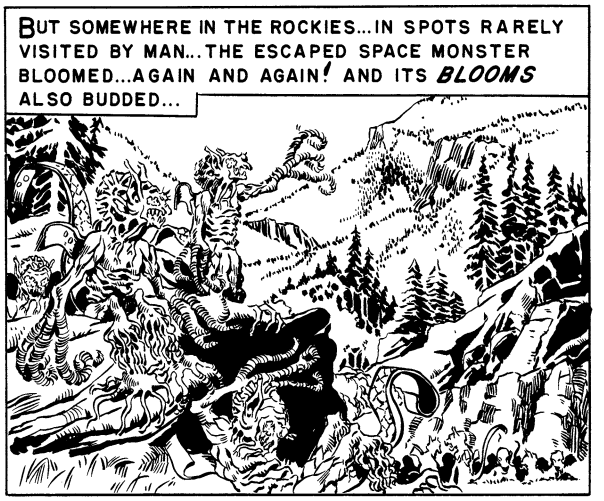
IT'S *GONE!*
IT MUST HAVE *SURVIVED THE CRASH!*
DON'T WORRY! IT'S ONLY *ONE* OF THEM! HOW MUCH *HARM* CAN IT DO? IT WILL EVENTUALLY BE *FOUND* AND *KILLED!*

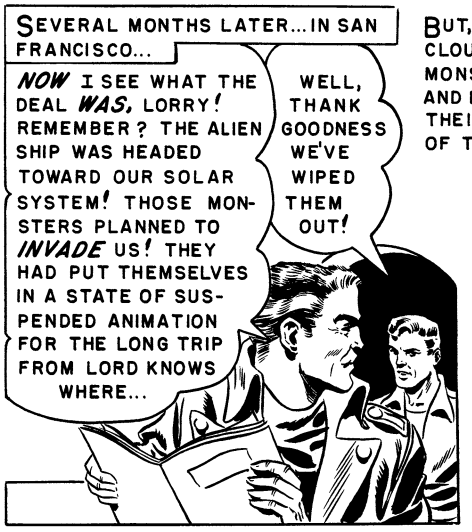
BUT A WEEK LATER... AT AN EASTERN LABORATORY...

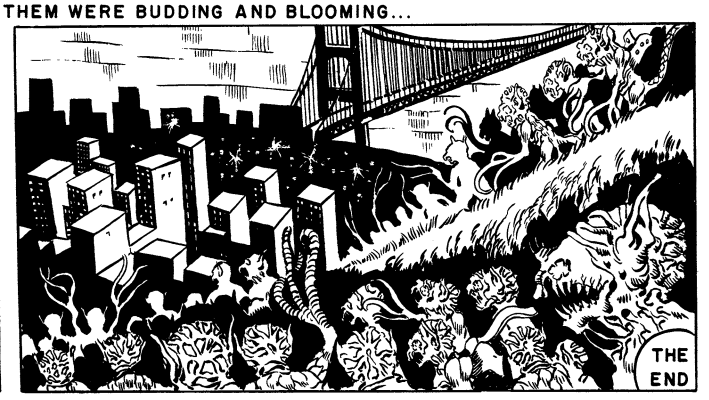


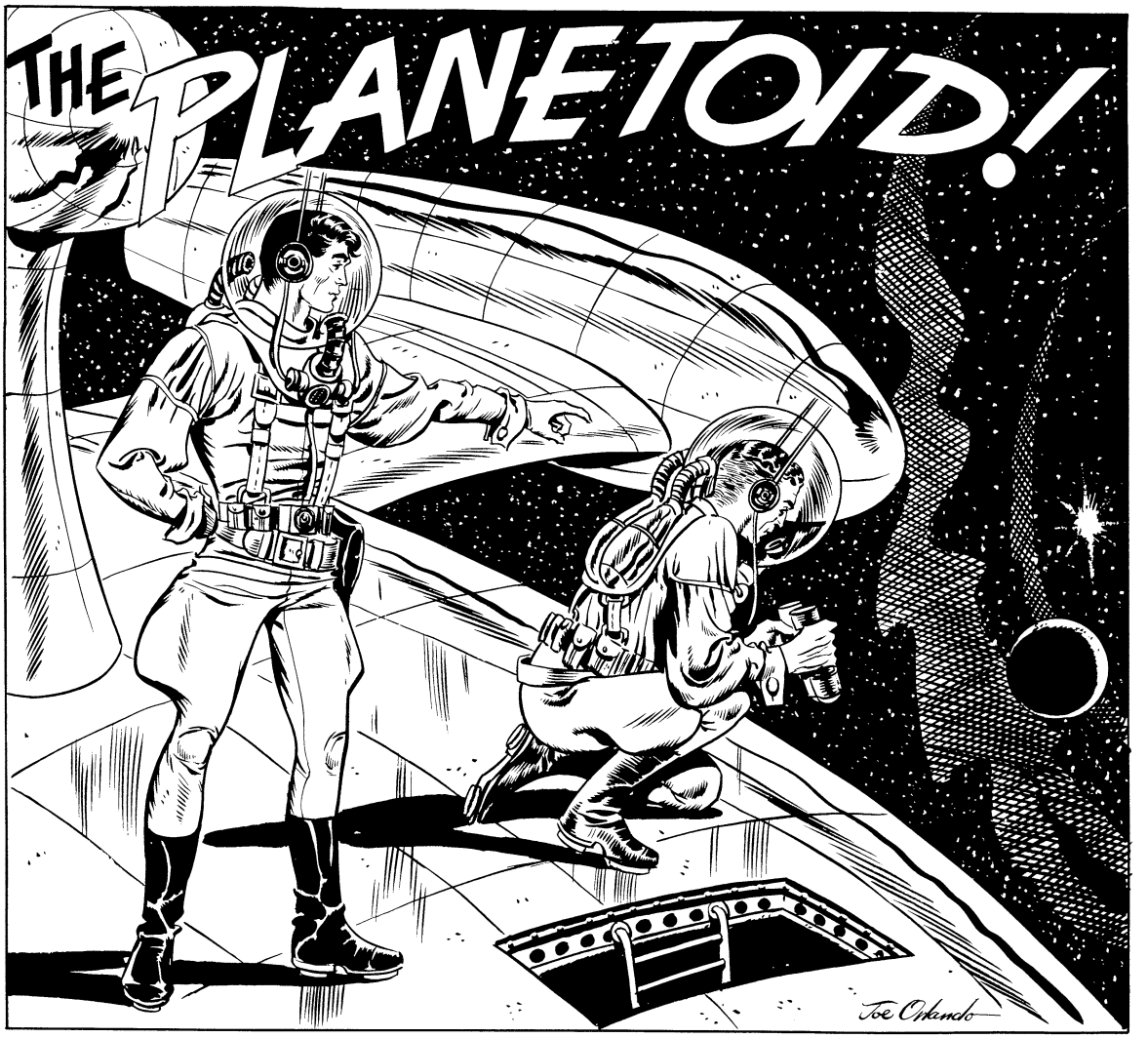

THEN FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY CAME REPORTS...
UTAH'S MONSTER HAS *REPRODUCED, TOO!*
SO HAS BRECKENRIDGE LABORATORY'S...
A NOTED SCIENTIST BEGAN A SOLEMN VIGIL...WATCHING ONE OF THE MONSTERS DAY AND NIGHT! FINALLY...
GENTLEMEN! I HAVE DISCOVERED HOW THESE CREATURES REPRODUCE! THEY *BREED* LIKE A *PLANT*...BY *BUDDING!* *EACH* INDIVIDUAL MONSTER CAN *BLOOM ANOTHER!*
THEN WE'VE GOT TO *DESTROY THEM ALL* BEFORE THEY GROW TOO LARGE IN NUMBERS!
ABSOLUTELY!


AND SO THE ORDER WAS GIVEN! EVERY SPACE MONSTER IN CAPTIVITY WAS DESTROYED...


BUT SOMEWHERE IN THE ROCKIES...IN SPOTS RARELY VISITED BY MAN...THE ESCAPED SPACE MONSTER BLOOMED...AGAIN AND AGAIN! AND ITS *BLOOMS* ALSO BUDDED...

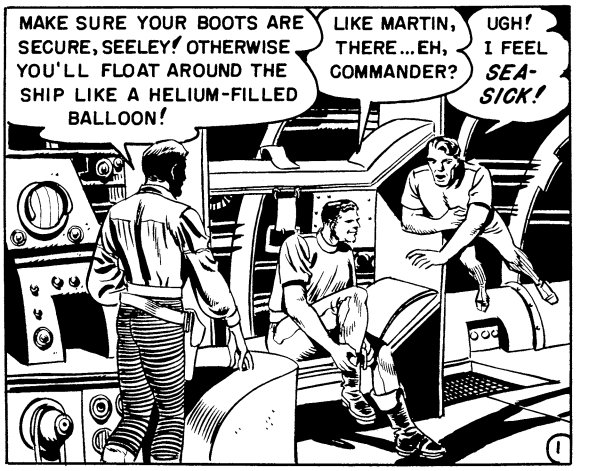

SEVERAL MONTHS LATER...IN SAN FRANCISCO...
NOW I SEE WHAT THE DEAL *WAS,* LORRY! REMEMBER? THE ALIEN SHIP WAS HEADED TOWARD OUR SOLAR SYSTEM! THOSE MONSTERS PLANNED TO *INVADE* US! THEY HAD PUT THEMSELVES IN A STATE OF SUSPENDED ANIMATION FOR THE LONG TRIP FROM LORD KNOWS WHERE...
WELL, THANK GOODNESS WE'VE WIPED THEM OUT!


BUT, AT THAT MOMENT...JUST OUTSIDE OF SAN FRANCISCO...A GREAT CLOUD OF DUST ROSE ABOVE A HOARD OF MILLIONS OF THE SPACE MONSTERS AS THEY BORE DOWN UPON THE UNSUSPECTING CITY! AND EVEN AS THEY MOVED ALONG TOWARD THE FIRST SKIRMISH IN THEIR ULTIMATE CONQUEST OF EARTH...HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF THEM WERE BUDDING AND BLOOMING...
THE END



'THIS IS WHAT *PROBABLY* HAPPENED! SAY A GROUP OF SCIENTISTS LEFT *EARTH*, BOUND FOR A DISTANT STAR! AS THEIR HUNDRED-FOOT NEEDLE-LIKE SPACE-SHIP SHOT SKYWARD...!'

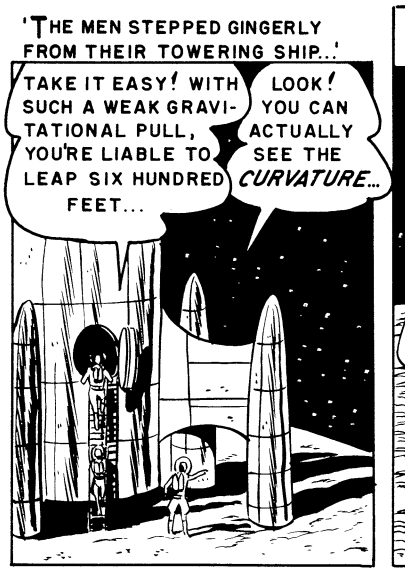
'THE SPACE TRAVELERS UNSTRAPPED THEMSELVES FROM THEIR TAKE-OFF COUCHES AND SLIPPED ON THEIR MAGNETIC BOOTS...'

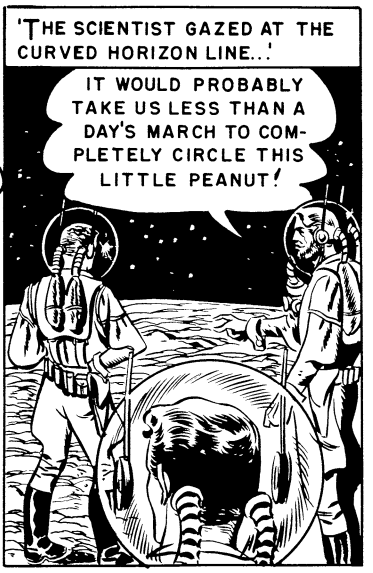

MAKE SURE YOUR BOOTS ARE SECURE, SEELEY! OTHERWISE YOU'LL FLOAT AROUND THE SHIP LIKE A HELIUM-FILLED BALLOON!
LIKE MARTIN, THERE... EH, COMMANDER?
UGH! I FEEL *SEA-SICK!*
1

'AS THEIR SHIP SPED THROUGH THE VELVETY BLACKNESS OF SPACE... PROBABLY CLOSE TO THE SPEED OF LIGHT... THE SCIENTISTS MADE THEMSELVES COMFORTABLE...'
MIGHT AS WELL SETTLE DOWN, MEN! IT'S GOING TO BE A LONG TRIP!
TENNIS, ANYONE?
'WEEKS WENT BY! THEN MONTHS! THE NEEDLE-SHAPED ROCKET CONTINUED ON! ONE DAY..'
HEY! HOW ABOUT DOING SOMETHING DIFFERENT FOR A CHANGE?
LIKE WHAT, SEELEY?
LIKE TAKING A WALK... OUTSIDE! C'MON! I'M TIRED OF BEING COOPED UP IN THE SHIP!
HOW ABOUT IT, COMMANDER? IS IT OKAY?
OKAY WITH ME, MEN! JUST BE SURE YOU DON'T BECOME DISLODGED FROM THE SHIP, OR YOU'LL FLOAT AWAY!
RIGHT, SIR! LET'S GO, SEELEY!
I'LL GET THE SPACE-SUITS!
'SEELEY AND MARTIN DRESSED EXCITEDLY IN THEIR SPACESUITS... STEPPED INTO THE AIRLOCK... AND FINALLY EMERGED OUT ONTO THE HULL OF THE HUGE SPACECRAFT..'
MAKE SURE YOUR MAGNETIC BOOTS HOLD BEFORE YOU TAKE A STEP!
RIGHT! SAY... WHAT PART OF THE GALAXY ARE WE IN NOW, ANYWAY?
I'LL CHECK WITH THE COMMANDER! COMMANDER BLAINE...
I'VE BEEN EAVES-DROPPING ON THE INTERCOM, SEELEY! I HEARD MARTIN'S QUESTION! WHY'D YOU ASK, MARTIN?
BECAUSE, SIR, THERE'S A DIM STAR UP AHEAD! I WAS WONDERING...
DIM STAR? H-M-M-M! THAT'S STRANGE! IT ISN'T INDICATED ON THE CHARTS HERE! HOLD ON! I'LL SWITCH ON THE TELESCOPIC-RADAR-VIEW...
SEELEY! LOOK!
WELL I'LL BE...
2

'THE TWO MEN OUTSIDE THE SHIP STARED IN FASCINATION AT THE PLANETOID AS THEY SPED PAST IT...'
COMMANDER! WE'RE PASSING A PLANETOID! CAN'T TELL THE SIZE OF IT FROM THIS DISTANCE...
WHAT? SAY! SOMETHING'S SCREWY! THAT DIM STAR UP AHEAD SEEMS TO BE A MINIATURE VERSION OF OUR SUN!
THEN THE PLANETOID OUT THERE IS PART OF A MINIATURE SOLAR SYSTEM!
EXACTLY! C'MON BACK INSIDE, BOYS! WE'RE GOING TO TAKE A LOOK!
'SEELEY AND MARTIN RE-ENTERED THE SPACESHIP AND TOOK THEIR PLACES...'
GYRO CONTROL! SWING SHIP AROUND!
GYRO ON! SHIP NOW TURNING!
FORWARD ROCKET TUBES! SLOW SHIP...
FORWARD ROCKETS NOW FIRING!
RADAR CONTROL! SET FOR APPROACH OF PLANETOID...
RADAR APPROACH... ON AND SOUNDING!
'SOON THE SHIP NEARED THE PLANETOID...'
LOOKS GREEN, SIR! VEGETATION APPARENT! LAND AND WATER FORMATIONS...
DISTANCE TO PLANETOID, NOW... FIFTY MILES...
ENTERING WEAK GRAVITATIONAL FIELD!
NO NEED TO STRAP IN, MEN! WE CAN SET DOWN ON HER EASILY ENOUGH! THE GRAVITATIONAL PULL IS NEGLIGIBLE...
ACCORDING TO CALCULATIONS, SIR, THE PLANETOID HAS A DIAMETER OF ABOUT TWELVE MILES!
3

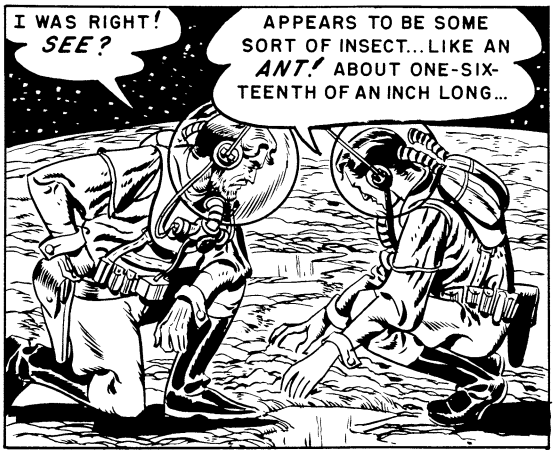
'THE SPACE TRAVELERS PICKED OUT A LIKELY SPOT IN THE CENTER OF A LARGE GREEN AREA, AND THEIR SHIP WAS GUIDED... STERN FIRST... TO AN EASY LANDING...'
WE'RE DOWN, SIR!
BETTER GET INTO YOUR SUITS, MEN! THERE'S NOT ENOUGH ATMOSPHERE...


'THE MEN STEPPED GINGERLY FROM THEIR TOWERING SHIP...'
TAKE IT EASY! WITH SUCH A WEAK GRAVITATIONAL PULL, YOU'RE LIABLE TO LEAP SIX HUNDRED FEET...
LOOK! YOU CAN ACTUALLY SEE THE CURVATURE...


'THE SCIENTIST GAZED AT THE CURVED HORIZON LINE...'
IT WOULD PROBABLY TAKE US LESS THAN A DAY'S MARCH TO COMPLETELY CIRCLE THIS LITTLE PEANUT!

LOOK, COMMANDER! THE VEGETATION IS INTERESTING! IT'S LIKE MOSS... GROWS ABOUT AN INCH HIGH...
WAIT A MINUTE! I THOUGHT I SAW SOMETHING MOVING... NEAR YOUR FOOT!

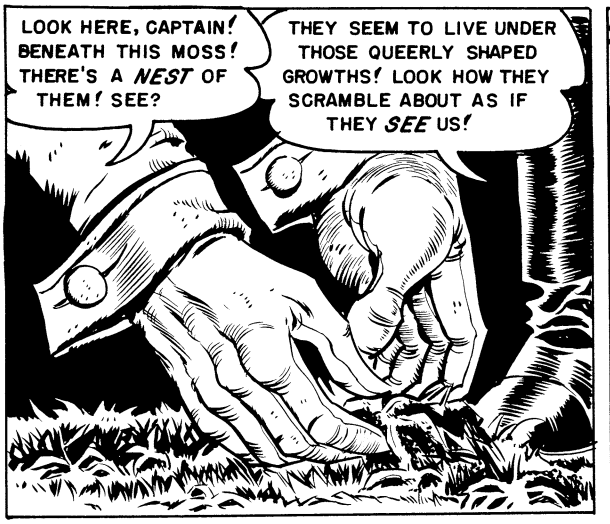
'ONE OF THE SCIENTISTS STOOPED AND SPREAD THE MOSS-LIKE GROWTH APART WITH HIS FINGERS'.



'COMMANDER BLAINE REACHED DOWN AND PICKED UP THE TINY BLACK STRUGGLING BUG IN HIS GLOVED HAND...'

VERY SOFT...NOT HARD-SHELLED, LIKE INSECTS BACK HOME!
PUT A MIKE NEAR IT, COMMANDER! LET'S HEAR IF IT'S MAKING ANY NOISE! WITH THESE HELMETS ON, IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO TELL!

'MARTIN TURNED ON HIS CHEST PICK-UP MIKE, AND COMMANDER BLAINE HELD THE INSECT CLOSE TO IT...'


LOOK HERE, CAPTAIN! BENEATH THIS MOSS! THERE'S A *NEST* OF THEM! SEE?
THEY SEEM TO LIVE UNDER THOSE QUEERLY SHAPED GROWTHS! LOOK HOW THEY SCRAMBLE ABOUT AS IF THEY *SEE* US!

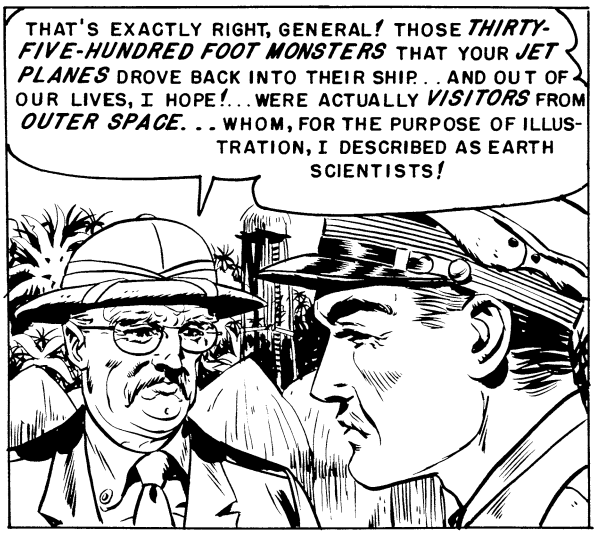
'COMMANDER BLAINE LISTENED INTENTLY TO THE STACCATO SOUNDS PICKED UP BY THE CHEST MIKE! THEY WERE MINGLED WITH THE SQUEALING CRIES FROM THE INSECTS...'

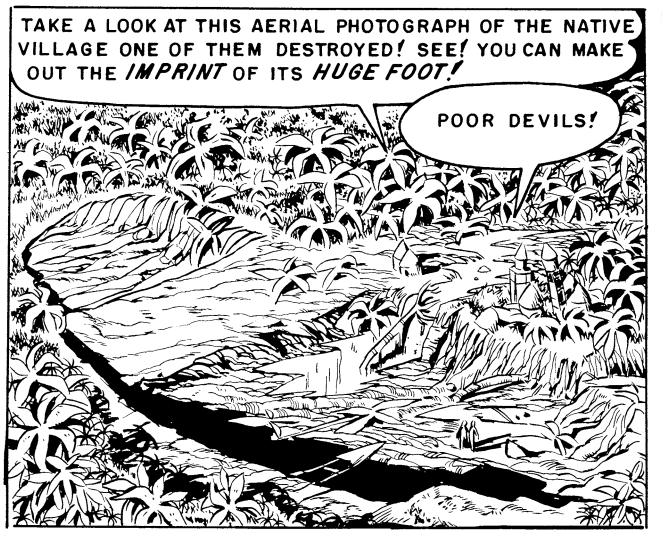
'LIEUTENANT MARTIN LIFTED HIS FOOT! IT WAS TOO LATE! ONE MISSTEP HAD COMPLETELY OBLITERATED THE TINY INSECT NEST...'

'SUDDENLY...'

'THE FLYING INSECTS CIRCLED THE SPACE EXPLORERS...'
OUCH!
HEY! THOSE THINGS HURT!
BEAT IT, BUGS!
'SEELEY SWUNG OUT AT ONE OF THE WINGED PESTS AND HIT IT! IT SPUN TO THE GROUND...'
LISTEN, COMMANDER! HEAR THEM?
THEY BUZZ... LIKE BEES...
COMMANDER BLAINE! MY SPACESUIT'S LEAKING!
MINE TOO! THOSE THINGS MUST HAVE PIERCED THEM...
C'MON! WE'D BETTER GET BACK TO THE SHIP!
YES! THE OXYGEN'S ESCAPING FROM OUR SUITS!
'THE SPACE TRAVELERS SCRAMBLED TO THEIR ROCKET SHIP...'
HURRY! GET ABOARD!
IMAGINE! BEING CHASED FROM THIS TINY PLANETOID BY INSECTS!
'THE OUTER DOOR WAS SLAMMED SHUT! WHEN THE PRESSURE IN THE AIRLOCK WAS BUILT UP, THE SCIENTISTS ENTERED THEIR CRAFT...'
PREPARE FOR TAKEOFF!
RIGHT! REAR ROCKET ENGINES NOW READY TO FIRE!
'THE SIGNAL WAS GIVEN, AND THE NEEDLE-LIKE ROCKET SHOT SKYWARD...LEAVING THE SURFACE OF THE TINY INSECT-RIDDEN PLANETOID...'
WELL! THAT'S THAT, COMMANDER!
RESUME ON OUR ORIGINAL COURSE, MARTIN!
6

...AND THAT'S WHAT PROBABLY HAPPENED! THAT'S WHAT IT PROBABLY SEEMED LIKE TO THEM!
ONLY, OF COURSE, THE PLANETOID WAS OUR EARTH... EH, PROFESSOR? AND THE GREEN AREA WHERE THOSE MONSTERS LANDED WAS THE INTERIOR OF AFRICA!


THAT'S EXACTLY RIGHT, GENERAL! THOSE THIRTY-FIVE-HUNDRED FOOT MONSTERS THAT YOUR JET PLANES DROVE BACK INTO THEIR SHIP... AND OUT OF OUR LIVES, I HOPE!... WERE ACTUALLY VISITORS FROM OUTER SPACE... WHOM, FOR THE PURPOSE OF ILLUSTRATION, I DESCRIBED AS EARTH SCIENTISTS!


TAKE A LOOK AT THIS AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH OF THE NATIVE VILLAGE ONE OF THEM DESTROYED! SEE! YOU CAN MAKE OUT THE IMPRINT OF ITS HUGE FOOT!
POOR DEVILS!

YES! THEY MUST HAVE THOUGHT WE HUMANS WERE INSECTS...AND THE JET PLANES LIKE BEES!
ONE OF THE JET PILOTS SAID THEIR SPACESHIP WAS OVER ELEVEN MILES HIGH!

IT'S LUCKY THEY LANDED WHERE THEY DID! IF THEY'D SET DOWN...SAY... NEAR NEW YORK...
LORD! WHAT A CATASTROPHE THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN!

I WONDER WHERE THEY CAME FROM?
WHO CAN SAY? JUST PRAY FOR ONE THING...

PRAY THEY DON'T COME BACK... AND BRING FLIT GUNS!
THE END... 7

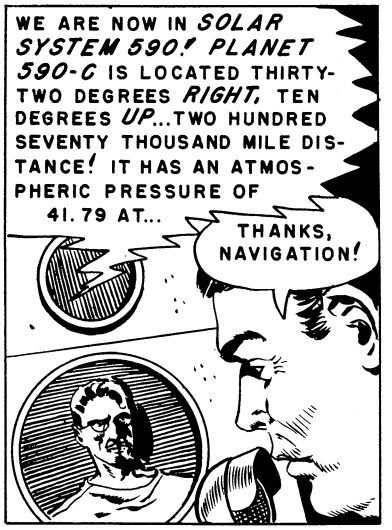
COMMANDER HARWOOD STARED IN HORROR AT THE SET OF THREE LIGHTS LOCATED ABOVE THE INSTRUMENT PANEL! THE RED ONE ON THE EXTREME LEFT BLINKED ON AND OFF MENACINGLY, ITS ANGRY GLOW CASTING A BLOODY PALLOR ON HIS ANXIOUS FACE...

SEE, COMMANDER HARWOOD? THE POWER PLANT IS *DISCHARGING!*
GET ON THE INTERCOM! SEND *MITCHEL* UP HERE!
YES, SIR!
ATTENTION ...LIEUTENANT MITCHEL! LIEUTENANT MITCHEL! COME TO CONTROL! *URGENT!*

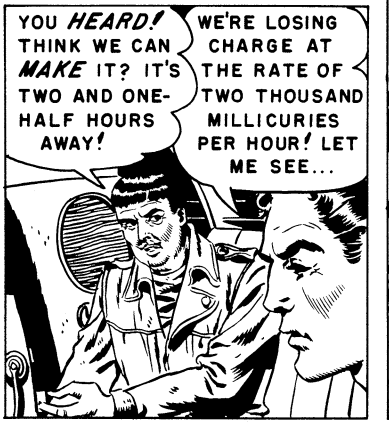
AS LIEUTENANT MITCHEL ENTERED THE CONTROL ROOM, HIS EYES FELL ON THE FLASHING RED LIGHT! HE GASPED...

HOW MUCH LONGER BEFORE WE LOSE ALL POWER?
I DON'T KNOW, COMMANDER! IN ANY CASE, WE'D BETTER HEAD FOR A PLANET BEFORE THAT HAPPENS...OR WE'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO LAND THE SHIP!

COMMANDER HARWOOD SNAPPED ON THE VISAPHONE...


WE ARE NOW IN SOLAR SYSTEM 590! PLANET 590-C IS LOCATED THIRTY-TWO DEGREES RIGHT, TEN DEGREES UP...TWO HUNDRED SEVENTY THOUSAND MILE DISTANCE! IT HAS AN ATMOSPHERIC PRESSURE OF 41.79 AT...
THANKS, NAVIGATION!

CAPTAIN HARWOOD FLICKED OFF THE VISAPHONE AND TURNED TO LIEUTENANT MITCHEL...

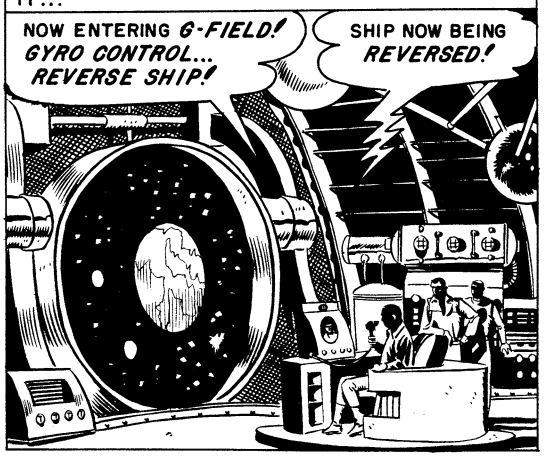

YOU HEARD! THINK WE CAN MAKE IT? IT'S TWO AND ONE-HALF HOURS AWAY!
WE'RE LOSING CHARGE AT THE RATE OF TWO THOUSAND MILLICURIES PER HOUR! LET ME SEE...

LIEUTENANT MITCHEL MUSED FOR A MOMENT...THEN ANNOUNCED.

WE CAN MAKE IT, BUT WE'LL ONLY HAVE ENOUGH POWER LEFT FOR ONE DESCENT TRY! WE'LL HAVE TO MAKE THE FIRST ONE COUNT!
GET ME GYRO CONTROL...AND MAKE IT SNAPPY!

THEN, AS THE HUGE ROCKET SHIP SWUNG SLOWLY ABOUT IN ITS FREE FALL, COMMANDER HARWOOD ANNOUNCED OVER THE CRAFT'S P.A. SYSTEM...

SOON PLANET 590-C LOOMED LARGE ON THE ASTRO-SCREEN, AS THE ROCKET SHIP SPED TOWARD IT...



THE RED LIGHT ON THE INSTRUMENT PANEL CONTINUED TO FLASH ON AND OFF AS THE ROCKET SHIP WAS TURNED SO THAT IT HEADED TOWARD THE STRANGE PLANET TAIL-FIRST ...

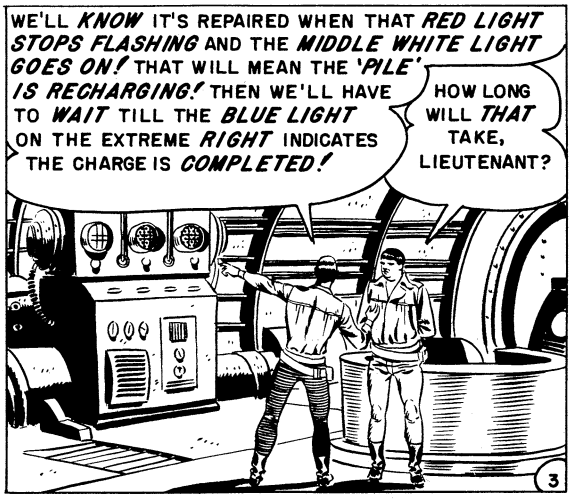
AS COMMANDER HARWOOD'S ROCKET SHIP PLUMMETED TAILFIRST TOWARD THE SURFACE OF THE STRANGE PLANET, A BLAST OF FLAMING ROCKET GASES EXPLODED FROM THE ROCKET TUBES...

THE SHIP'S FALL WAS SLOWED! A SECOND BLAST CAUSED THE SHIP TO HESITATE JUST ABOVE THE PLANET'S TERRAIN...

THEN THE CRAFT SETTLED GENTLY AS THE BLASTING ROCKETS DIED...

COMMANDER HARWOOD RELEASED HIMSELF FROM HIS SHOCK-COUCH AND STOOD OVER LIEUTENANT MITCHEL...

THE LIEUTENANT POINTED TO THE FLASHING RED LIGHT.


WE'LL KNOW IT'S REPAIRED WHEN THAT RED LIGHT STOPS FLASHING AND THE MIDDLE WHITE LIGHT GOES ON! THAT WILL MEAN THE 'PILE' IS RECHARGING! THEN WE'LL HAVE TO WAIT TILL THE BLUE LIGHT ON THE EXTREME RIGHT INDICATES THE CHARGE IS COMPLETED!
HOW LONG WILL THAT TAKE, LIEUTENANT?
3

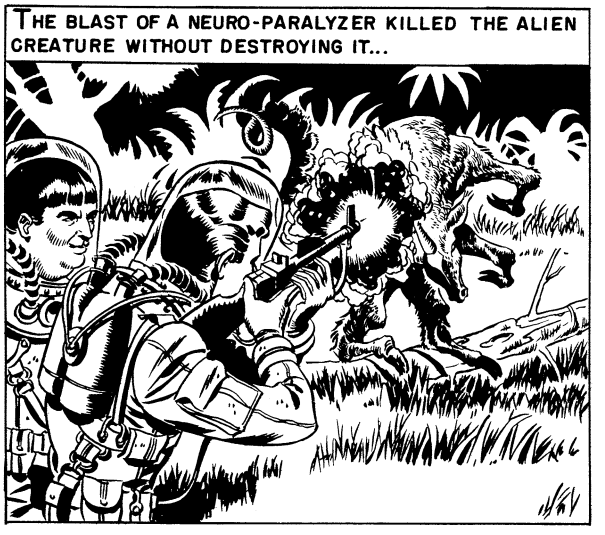
CAN'T SAY FOR SURE, COMMANDER! MAYBE THREE MONTHS! MAYBE LONGER!
THREE MONTHS!

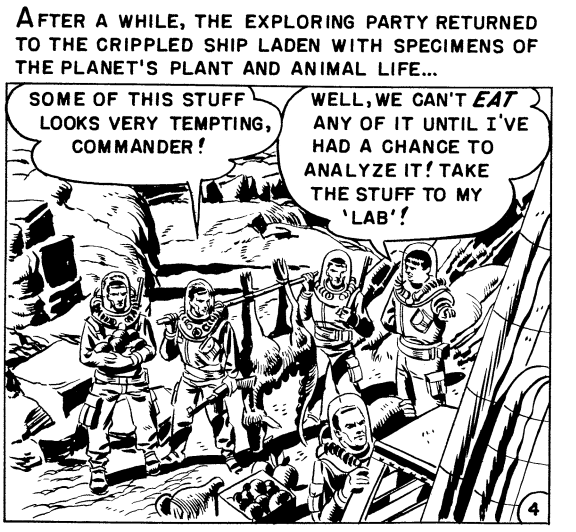
GOOD LORD, MAN! WE'VE ONLY ENOUGH PROVISIONS FOR ANOTHER MONTH... TWO AT THE MOST WITH EXTREME RATIONING!
SORRY, SIR! THAT'S ABOUT HOW LONG IT WILL TAKE! I DOUBT IF IT WOULD BE LESS!

COMMANDER HARWOOD SNAPPED ON THE P.A. SYSTEM ...
ATTENTION... ALL HANDS! I WANT VOLUNTEERS TO DON SPACESUITS AND ACCOMPANY ME ON AN EXPLORING EXPEDITION!

SOON, THE AIRLOCK OF THE CRIPPLED SHIP OPENED, AND A SMALL SPACESUIT-CLAD PARTY EMERGED...
THAT'S THE STORY, MEN! WE'VE ONLY ONE MONTH'S FOOD... TWO IF WE STRETCH IT... AND THE RECHARGING MAY TAKE THREE MONTHS...
SO WE HUNT UP SOME EXTRA 'VITTLES', EH, COMMANDER?

RIGHT! WE'LL TAKE A FEW SAMPLES OF EVERYTHING BACK TO THE SHIP AND TEST THEM OUT!
LOOK, SIR! THERE'S AN ANIMAL OF SOME KIND! SHALL I...?


THE BLAST OF A NEURO-PARALYZER KILLED THE ALIEN CREATURE WITHOUT DESTROYING IT...

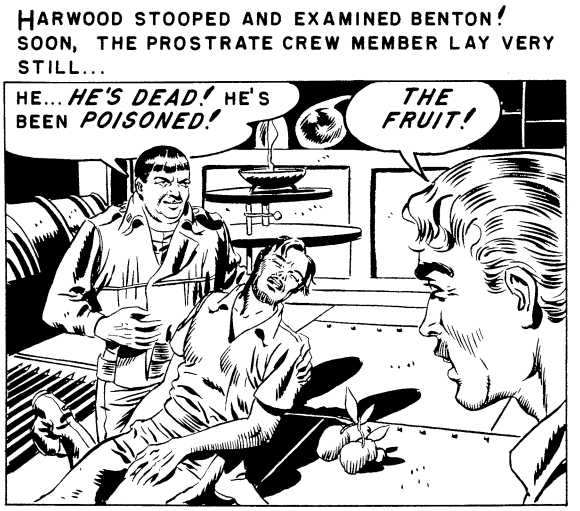

AFTER A WHILE, THE EXPLORING PARTY RETURNED TO THE CRIPPLED SHIP LADEN WITH SPECIMENS OF THE PLANET'S PLANT AND ANIMAL LIFE...
SOME OF THIS STUFF LOOKS VERY TEMPTING, COMMANDER!
WELL, WE CAN'T EAT ANY OF IT UNTIL I'VE HAD A CHANCE TO ANALYZE IT! TAKE THE STUFF TO MY 'LAB'!
4

WHEN COMMANDER HARWOOD ENTERED THE SHIP...
HOW'S IT COMING, MITCHEL ?
LOOK FOR YOURSELF, SIR!

THE MIDDLE WHITE LIGHT ON THE INSTRUMENT PANEL GLOWED REASSURINGLY...
YOU FOUND THE LEAK!
YES, SIR! A "PILE ROD" HAD SLIPPED OUT OF ITS HOLE... LEAVING A SORT OF ESCAPE VALVE FOR THE RADIOACTIVE CHARGE!

WHEN THAT BLUE LIGHT GOES ON... IN ABOUT THREE MONTHS... THE "PILE" WILL HAVE RECHARGED ITSELF, AND WE CAN RESUME OUR TRIP!
WHICH REMINDS ME! I'VE GOT TO GET TO MY LAB!

COMMANDER HARWOOD DESCENDED FROM "CONTROL" TO A DOOR MARKED, "LABORATORY-PRIVATE-KEEP OUT"..
WHAT IN BLAZES IS GOING ON HERE?
IT'S BENTON, SIR! HE... HE ATE SOME OF THE FRUIT AND JUST DOUBLED UP LIKE THAT!
OOOOOOOHH!


HARWOOD STOOPED AND EXAMINED BENTON! SOON, THE PROSTRATE CREW MEMBER LAY VERY STILL...
HE... HE'S DEAD! HE'S BEEN POISONED!
THE FRUIT!

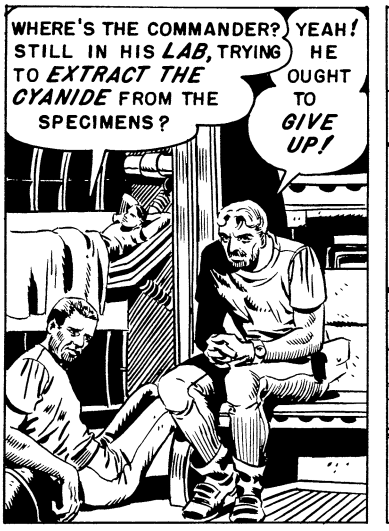
COMMANDER HARWOOD PICKED UP A PIECE OF FRUIT AND EXAMINED IT...
CYANIDE! THIS FRUIT IS IMPREGNATED WITH CYANIDE SALTS!
WHAT ABOUT THE ANIMALS... AND THE OTHER PLANT LIFE...?

GIVE ME SOME TIME TO ANALYZE THIS STUFF! I'LL LET YOU KNOW! MEANWHILE, GET BENTON OUT OF HERE AND GIVE HIM A DECENT BURIAL!
YES, SIR!
C'MON, FOWLES! GIVE ME A HAND WITH HIM!
5

SEVERAL DAYS LATER, COMMANDER HARWOOD ANNOUNCED...

WE'VE GOT TO GO ON A *STRICT RATIONING SYSTEM!* WE'VE GOT TO TRY TO MAKE OUR *REMAINING FOOD LAST* UNTIL THAT BLUE LIGHT GOES *ON!*
BUT AT THE MOST, WE ONLY HAVE ENOUGH FOOD FOR *TWO MONTHS.* MITCHEL SAID IT MIGHT TAKE *THREE* TO CHARGE THE 'PILE'!

A MONTH WENT BY. ONE MONTH OF ANXIOUSLY WATCHING THE SET OF LIGHTS ON THE INSTRUMENT PANEL... WAITING... WAITING FOR THE WHITE ONE TO GO OFF AND THE BLUE ONE TO FLASH ON...



MITCHEL! HOW MUCH *LONGER?* HOW MUCH LONGER TILL THE *'PILE' IS CHARGED?*
I *CAN'T TELL,* BAXTER! MAYBE *ANOTHER MONTH!* MAYBE *LESS!* MAYBE A *WEEK!* I CAN'T...

WE'LL BE *DEAD* BY THAT TIME! ALL OF US... *STARVED!*
NOT IF *ONE* OF US AGREES TO *SACRIFICE HIMSELF* FOR THE *OTHERS!*
GOOD LORD, MAN! WHAT ARE YOU *SAYING?*
6

YOU HEARD ME, COMMANDER! WHEN THE FOOD RUNS OUT, WE'LL HAVE TO DRAW LOTS! IT'S THE ONLY WAY TO STAY ALIVE! THE ONLY NON-POISONOUS 'FOOD' ON THIS PLANET IS US!
GOT ANY BETTER IDEAS, COMMANDER?
OF COURSE! MUCH BETTER!
I'VE JUST COME FROM THE LAB! I'VE SUCCEEDED IN TREATING SOME OF THE PLANET'S ANIMAL MEAT SO THAT THE CYANIDE SALT IN IT IS CHANGED TO CYANIDE GAS AND IS BURNED OFF!
YOU MEAN...
YES! I MEAN WE CAN NOW EAT THE PLANT AND ANIMAL LIFE ON THIS PLANET SAFELY! THERE WILL BE NO NEED TO DO WHAT YOU SUGGEST WHEN OUR RATIONS RUN OUT!
DID YOU HEAR THAT?
THANK GOD! THANK GOD!
THAT NIGHT, THE LAST OF THE RATIONS WERE EATEN, AND A FEAST WAS PLANNED FOR THE NEXT DAY... A FEAST OF 'TREATED MEAT AND FRUIT'! AS THE HALF-STARVED CREW SEATED ITSELF...
YUM! YUM!
LOOKS GOOD!
REMEMBER, GENTLEMEN! NOT TOO MUCH! YOU'VE BEEN ON MEAGER RATIONS. EAT SLOWLY... TAKE IT EASY!
THE MEN ATTACKED THE MEAT RAVENOUSLY! SOON THEIR PLATES WERE CLEAN...
HEY, COMMANDER! AREN'T YOU EATING?
NOT YET, GENTLEMEN! I WANTED TO MAKE SURE ALL OF YOU HAD EATEN!
YOU SEE, I LIED TO YOU! I DIDN'T DISCOVER A METHOD OF REMOVING THE CYANIDE FROM THE PLANT AND ANIMAL LIFE! BUT AFTER HEARING YOU TALK OF DRAWING LOTS WHEN THE RATIONS RAN OUT, I HIT UPON THIS PLAN! GENTLEMEN, IN A FEW MINUTES YOU WILL ALL BE DEAD... FROM CYANIDE POISONING!
COMMANDER HARWOOD WATCHED AS, ONE BY ONE, THE CREW SLUMPED IN THEIR CHAIRS... BAXTER, MITCHEL, THE REST! SOON, THEY WERE ALL DEAD! THEN, COMMANDER HARWOOD REACHED DOWN AND BEGAN TO EAT THE CYANIDE IMPREGNATED FOOD...
I COULDN'T LET THEM DO IT! I COULDN'T LET THEM EAT EACH OTHER!
HARWOOD FINISHED HIS PORTION AND SMILED! SUDDENLY SOMETHING CAUGHT HIS EYE... SOMETHING ON THE INSTRUMENT PANEL! THE BLUE LIGHT ON THE EXTREME RIGHT WAS FLASHING ON AND OFF...
OH, GOD! GOD! WHAT HAVE I DONE?
THE END
7

MY NAME IS RAYMOND WILLIAMS, JR.! THE EVENTS I AM ABOUT TO RELATE BEGAN TWO YEARS AGO! I WAS, BACK THEN, ASSISTANT TO AN OBSCURE GENIUS IN THE FIELD OF TEMPORAL PROCESSION... DOCTOR VANDEVEER HYBOLT! I WAS TWENTY-THREE AT THE TIME...

SECURE THE NEGATIVE RELAY TO THE THIRD ANODE, WILLIAMS! THAT WILL COMPLETE THE CIRCUIT!

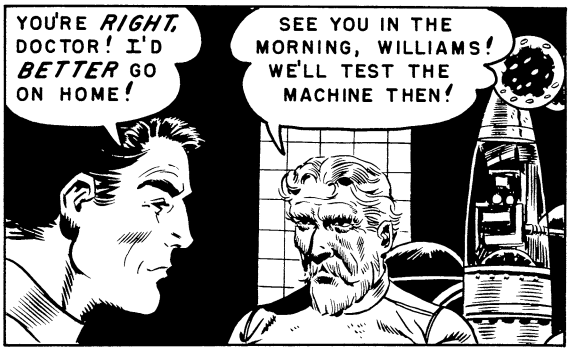
AND YOUR TEMPORAL TRANSPORTER WILL BE *COMPLETED*, EH, DOCTOR HYBOLT?

DOCTOR HYBOLT HAD HIRED ME AS HIS ASSISTANT TO HELP COMPLETE HIS LIFE'S WORK... A TEMPORAL TRANSPORTER... A TIME MACHINE! I SOLDERED THE LAST CONNECTION AND BREATHED A SIGH OF RELIEF...

WELL, THAT *DOES* IT, DOCTOR! WHEN DO YOU PLAN ON *TESTING* IT?

TOMORROW, PERHAPS! WHY DON'T YOU RUN ALONG *HOME*, WILLIAMS? YOUR *MOTHER* WILL BE QUITE ANXIOUS! YOU HAVEN'T BEEN HOME IN *TWO NIGHTS!*

DOCTOR HYBOLT WAS RIGHT! MOTHER ALWAYS WORRIED ABOUT ME! EVER SINCE FATHER HAD DESERTED US... WHEN I WAS A YEAR OLD! SHE'D WORKED AND SAVED TO PUT ME THROUGH COLLEGE! SINCE I'D BECOME DOCTOR HYBOLT'S ASSISTANT AND HE'D SWORN ME TO SECRECY ABOUT OUR WORK, MOTHER'D BECOME *EVEN WORSE*...



I LEFT DOCTOR HYBOLT'S SECRET LABORATORY AND DROVE HOME! MOTHER WAS WAITING...

RAYMOND? THAT *YOU? THANK HEAVENS!* WHERE HAVE YOU *BEEN* THESE PAST TWO NIGHTS? I'VE BEEN WORRIED *SICK* ABOUT YOU!
I'VE BEEN *WORKING*, MOTHER! PLEASE DON'T ASK ME ANY *QUESTIONS!*

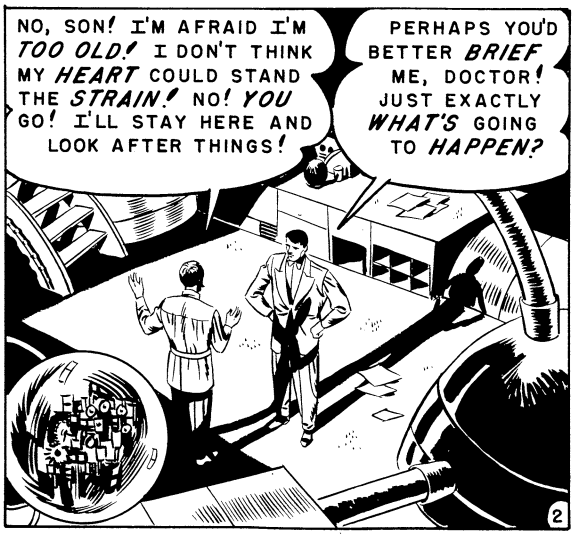
MOTHER LOOKED AT ME WITH TEAR-FILLED EYES! I KNEW WHAT WAS COMING! LORD, HOW I HATED IT...

FOR TWENTY THREE YEARS I'VE WORKED FOR YOU... *SLAVED* FOR YOU... PUT YOU THROUGH *SCHOOL!* *NOW* WHAT DO I GET? *ONE* OF THESE DAYS, YOU'LL UP AND *WALK OUT*... JUST LIKE *HE DID!*
I'M GOING TO *BED*, MOTHER! I'M *TIRED!*

THAT NIGHT, I LAY AWAKE... STARING INTO THE BLACKNESS OVER MY BED! I COULDN'T SLEEP! I WAS TOO EXCITED ABOUT THE TESTING OF DOCTOR HYBOLT'S MACHINE THE NEXT MORNING...

THE NEXT DAY, I AROSE EARLY AND RUSHED OFF TO THE LABORATORY! WHEN I ARRIVED, DOCTOR HYBOLT WAS ALREADY CHECKING AND ADJUSTING THE TEMPORAL TRANSPORTER...

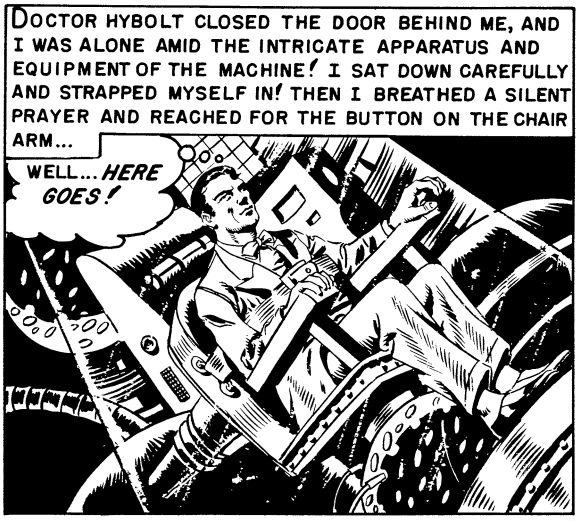
AH, WILLIAMS! EVERYTHING IS READY! I'VE SET THE CONTROLS FOR YOU TO BE SENT BACK IN TIME *TWENTY-FIVE YEARS*...
ME? BUT AREN'T *YOU* GOING, DOCTOR?

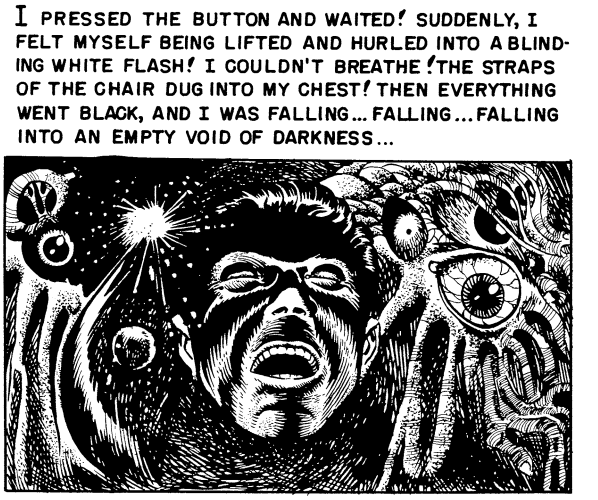

NO, SON! I'M AFRAID I'M *TOO OLD!* I DON'T THINK MY *HEART* COULD STAND THE *STRAIN!* NO! *YOU* GO! I'LL STAY HERE AND LOOK AFTER THINGS!
PERHAPS YOU'D BETTER *BRIEF* ME, DOCTOR! JUST EXACTLY *WHAT'S* GOING TO *HAPPEN?*
2

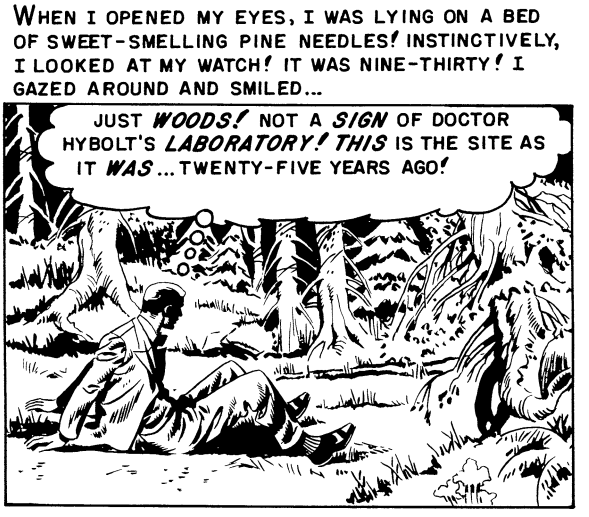
WELL, I DON'T HAVE TO GO INTO DETAIL ON HOW THE MACHINE *WORKS!* YOU *KNOW* THAT ALREADY! WHAT WILL HAPPEN IS...YOU'LL BE *SENT BACK IN TIME TWENTY-FIVE YEARS*...I'VE SET THE *DATE* ON THE *TIME-TRAVEL DIAL*, HERE!

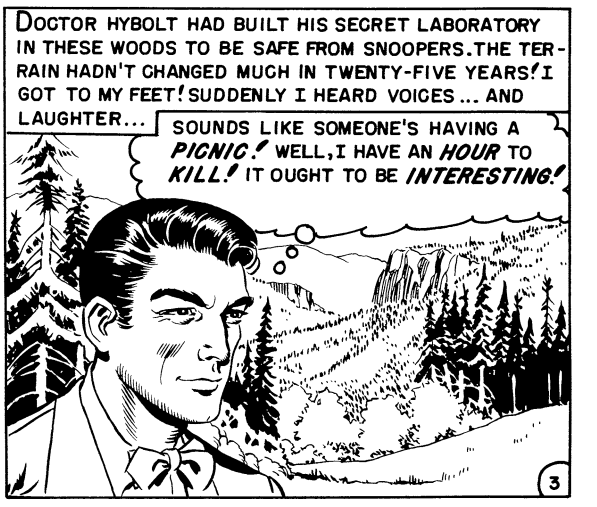
YOU WILL *REMAIN* THERE FOR *ONE* HOUR! I'VE SET THAT ON THE *'DURATION-OF-STAY' LEVER*, HERE! AFTER THE HOUR IS UP, YOU WILL *RETURN* TO THE *PRESENT!* THE *MACHINE* WILL *NOT FOLLOW YOU* BUT MERELY *'THRUST'* YOU INTO THE *PAST!* CONVERSELY, WHEN THE HOUR IS UP, IT WILL *'PULL'* YOU *BACK* TO THE *PRESENT!* ARE YOU *READY?*

I NODDED! MY HEART WAS BEATING LIKE A TRIPHAMMER! DOCTOR HYBOLT OPENED THE DOOR TO THE MACHINE...
STRAP YOURSELF IN! YOU WILL FIND A *BUTTON* ON THE ARM OF THE CHAIR! *PRESS IT* WHEN YOU ARE *READY!*
YES, DOCTOR!


DOCTOR HYBOLT CLOSED THE DOOR BEHIND ME, AND I WAS ALONE AMID THE INTRICATE APPARATUS AND EQUIPMENT OF THE MACHINE! I SAT DOWN CAREFULLY AND STRAPPED MYSELF IN! THEN I BREATHED A SILENT PRAYER AND REACHED FOR THE BUTTON ON THE CHAIR ARM...
WELL... *HERE GOES!*


I PRESSED THE BUTTON AND WAITED! SUDDENLY, I FELT MYSELF BEING LIFTED AND HURLED INTO A BLINDING WHITE FLASH! I COULDN'T BREATHE! THE STRAPS OF THE CHAIR DUG INTO MY CHEST! THEN EVERYTHING WENT BLACK, AND I WAS FALLING... FALLING... FALLING INTO AN EMPTY VOID OF DARKNESS...


WHEN I OPENED MY EYES, I WAS LYING ON A BED OF SWEET-SMELLING PINE NEEDLES! INSTINCTIVELY, I LOOKED AT MY WATCH! IT WAS NINE-THIRTY! I GAZED AROUND AND SMILED...
JUST *WOODS!* NOT A *SIGN* OF DOCTOR HYBOLT'S *LABORATORY! THIS* IS THE SITE AS IT *WAS*... TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO!


DOCTOR HYBOLT HAD BUILT HIS SECRET LABORATORY IN THESE WOODS TO BE SAFE FROM SNOOPERS. THE TERRAIN HADN'T CHANGED MUCH IN TWENTY-FIVE YEARS! I GOT TO MY FEET! SUDDENLY I HEARD VOICES... AND LAUGHTER...
SOUNDS LIKE SOMEONE'S HAVING A *PICNIC!* WELL, I HAVE AN *HOUR* TO *KILL!* IT OUGHT TO BE *INTERESTING!*
3

I MOVED THROUGH THE WOODS IN THE DIRECTION OF THE VOICES! SOON, I NEARED A GRASSY GLADE! SEVERAL MEN AND WOMEN WERE THERE, SPREADING OUT A RED AND WHITE CHECKED CLOTH...

HMMMM! I WAS *RIGHT!* THEY *ARE* HAVING A *PICNIC!*

I WATCHED THE HAPPY SCENE FOR A LONG WHILE! I WAS ESPECIALLY ATTRACTED BY ONE OF THE WOMEN! SHE WAS VERY BEAUTIFUL! THERE WAS SOMETHING ABOUT HER...

EVERYONE *ELSE* SEEMS TO BE PAIRED OFF IN *COUPLES*... BUT *SHE* LOOKS LIKE SHE'S *ALONE!*

I KEPT OUT OF SIGHT...STUDYING HER! I LIKED THE WAY SHE SMILED... THE FUNNY WAY SHE TOSSED HER HAIR BACK OVER HER SHOULDERS! THEN I LOOKED AT MY WATCH! IT WAS ALMOST TEN-THIRTY...

IN A MOMENT, MY *HOUR* WILL BE *UP,* AND I'LL BE PULLED BACK TO DOCTOR HYBOLT'S LABORATORY...TO THE *PRESENT...*

I BEGAN TO WISH I HAD MORE TIME...SO THAT I COULD *MEET* THE SWEET YOUNG GIRL I'D BEEN WATCHING! I PREPARED MYSELF FOR THE SHOCK OF RETURNING! I GRITTED MY TEETH! A MINUTE WENT BY... THEN TWO...THEN THREE...

NOTHING'S *HAPPENING!* SOMETHING MUST BE *WRONG!* DOCTOR HYBOLT! *DOCTOR HYBOLT!*

I GUESS I MUST HAVE CRIED OUT! SUDDENLY, THE PICNICKER'S LAUGHTER AND CHATTERING STOPPED! THEY STARED AT THE SPOT WHERE I WAS HIDING...

WHO...WHO'S *THERE?*

I...I'M *SORRY!* I DIDN'T MEAN TO *ALARM* YOU!

I STEPPED OUT WHERE THEY COULD SEE ME! THE LOVELY GIRL I'D BEEN WATCHING SMILED AT ME...

HELLO! LIKE TO *JOIN* US? MY NAME'S *MARTHA ANDERS!*

I'M RAYMOND WILLIAMS! I HOPE YOU DON'T *MIND!*

THEY MADE ME WELCOME! SOON I WAS GETTING QUITE FRIENDLY WITH MARTHA! I ALMOST WELCOMED THE SNAFU THAT MUST HAVE CAUSED DOCTOR HYBOLT'S MACHINE TO FAIL TO PULL ME BACK FROM THE PAST AT THE APPOINTED TIME...

WHY DO YOU KEEP LOOKING AT YOUR *WATCH, RAY?*

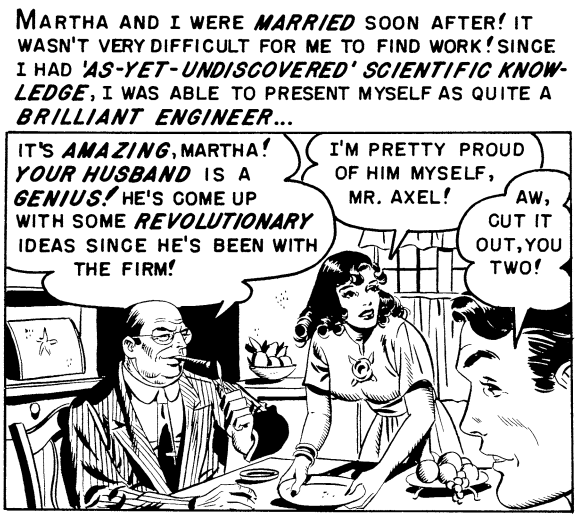
DO I, MARTHA? I DON'T *MEAN* TO! I... I *WON'T ANYMORE!*

4

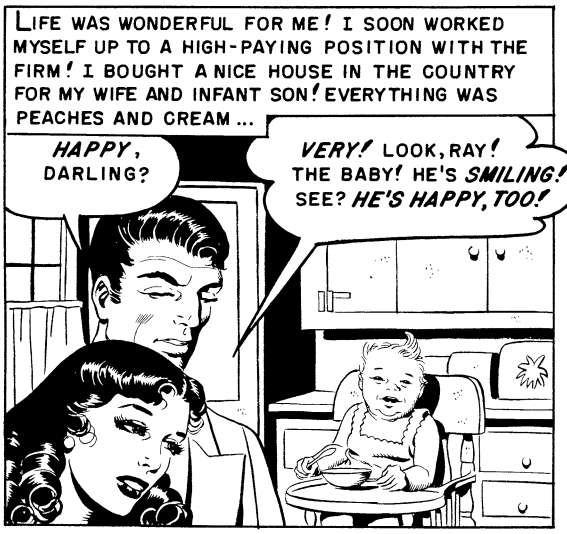
AFTER THE PICNIC, MARTHA TOOK ME HOME TO MEET HER FOLKS! BY THAT TIME, I'D BECOME CONVINCED OF THE FACT THAT I WAS TRAPPED IN THE PAST! I'D DECIDED TO MAKE THE MOST OF IT! THAT NIGHT, ON MARTHA'S BACK PORCH...
YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL, MARTHA!
OH, RAY! YOU'RE... SWEET!

I TOOK HER IN MY ARMS! EVERYTHING SEEMED SO UNREAL! IT WAS LIKE A DREAM... A HEAVENLY DREAM.
MARRY ME, MARTHA! I LOVE YOU!
RAY! RAY! DO YOU REALLY WANT ME?

OF COURSE I DO, DARLING!
THEN MY ANSWER IS 'YES'!


MARTHA AND I WERE MARRIED SOON AFTER! IT WASN'T VERY DIFFICULT FOR ME TO FIND WORK! SINCE I HAD 'AS-YET-UNDISCOVERED' SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE, I WAS ABLE TO PRESENT MYSELF AS QUITE A BRILLIANT ENGINEER...
IT'S AMAZING, MARTHA! YOUR HUSBAND IS A GENIUS! HE'S COME UP WITH SOME REVOLUTIONARY IDEAS SINCE HE'S BEEN WITH THE FIRM!
I'M PRETTY PROUD OF HIM MYSELF, MR. AXEL!
AW, CUT IT OUT, YOU TWO!

AND A YEAR LATER, MARTHA GAVE BIRTH TO A BABY BOY...
ISN'T HE BEAUTIFUL, DARLING? I WANT TO CALL HIM RAYMOND JUNIOR, AFTER HIS DADDY!
GUTCHIE... GUTCHIE...


LIFE WAS WONDERFUL FOR ME! I SOON WORKED MYSELF UP TO A HIGH-PAYING POSITION WITH THE FIRM! I BOUGHT A NICE HOUSE IN THE COUNTRY FOR MY WIFE AND INFANT SON! EVERYTHING WAS PEACHES AND CREAM...
HAPPY, DARLING?
VERY! LOOK, RAY! THE BABY! HE'S SMILING! SEE? HE'S HAPPY, TOO!

AND THEN, ONE NIGHT, IT HAPPENED! I WAS LYING IN MY BED, COUNTING MY LUCKY STARS THAT I'D BEEN TRAPPED IN TIME BY THAT STRANGE TRICK OF FATE, WHEN...
GOOD LORD!
5

IT WAS LIKE A TERRIBLE EXPLOSION! I FELT MYSELF LIFTED FROM MY BED AND HURLED INTO UNCONSCIOUSNESS! WHEN I CAME TO, I WAS LYING FLAT ON MY BACK! I LOOKED AROUND! WHEN MY EYES GREW ACCUSTOMED TO THE DARKNESS, I SAW...

THE *TIME MACHINE!* I'M BACK IN THE *TIME MACHINE!*

I STAGGERED OUT OF THE EQUIPMENT-LINED INTERIOR! BEFORE ME, LYING ON THE FLOOR, WAS A WHITENED SKELETON IN THE ROTTED REMAINS OF A LAB COAT...

IT... *IT'S DOCTOR HYBOLT!*

MY EYES SCANNED THE TEMPORAL TRANSPORTER'S CONTROLS! THE 'TIME-TRAVEL' DIAL *STILL* READ *TWENTY-FIVE YEARS*, BUT THE *'DURATION-OF-STAY' LEVER* HAD BEEN PUSHED *FORWARD*...TO *TWO YEARS!*

HE MUST HAVE HAD A *HEART ATTACK!* WHEN HE *FELL*, HE KNOCKED THE DURATION-OF-STAY LEVER *AHEAD!*

SUDDENLY I THOUGHT OF *MARTHA!* WHAT WOULD SHE *THINK?* SHE'D WAKE UP AND FIND ME *GONE!* SHE'D THINK I *LEFT* HER JUST LIKE...

OH... *MY GOD! MARTHA?*

I DASHED OUT OF THE OVERGROWN LABORATORY AND CAUGHT A RIDE INTO TOWN! I RAN ALL THE WAY TO THE HOUSE...

MOTHER!

RAYMOND! RAYMOND! YOU'VE COME *BACK!*

MARTHA WAS MY *MOTHER'S* NAME! I HAD TO BE SURE! I INTERRUPTED HER RAVING...

MOTHER! WAS YOUR MAIDEN NAME... *'ANDERS'?*

WHY... YES! BUT YOU'VE BEEN GONE *TWO YEARS!* WHERE...

AND... YOU MET *FATHER* ... ON A *PICNIC?*

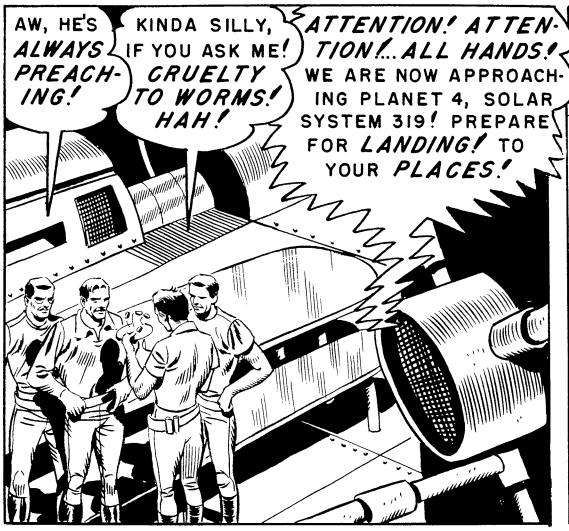
YES! AND YOU'RE GOING TO BE JUST *LIKE* HIM... GOING TO *LEAVE* ME... SOB! SOB!...

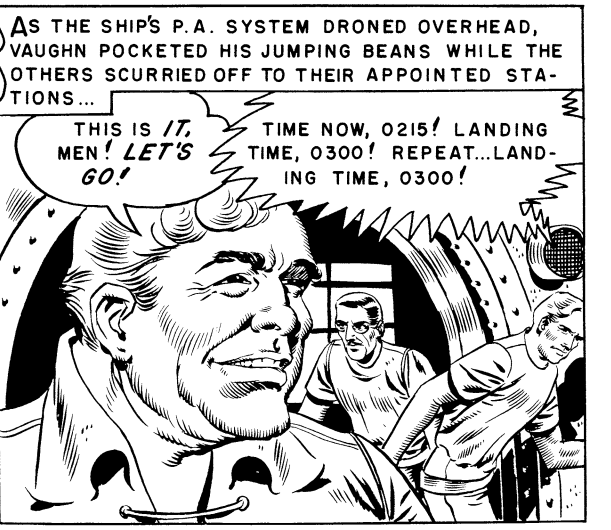
I LEFT MOTHER CRYING AND WENT OUT! I KNEW *NOW* WHY FATHER DESERTED HER AND NEVER CAME BACK! *I* COULDN'T GO BACK! THE GIRL I'D MARRIED WHILE I WAS TRAPPED IN TIME WAS MY *MOTHER* WHEN SHE WAS YOUNG! AND I... *I AM MY OWN FATHER!* WOULD... WOULD *YOU* GO BACK?

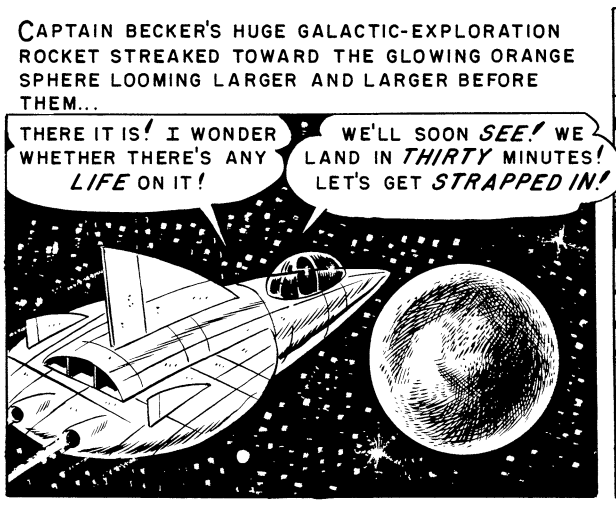
THE END...

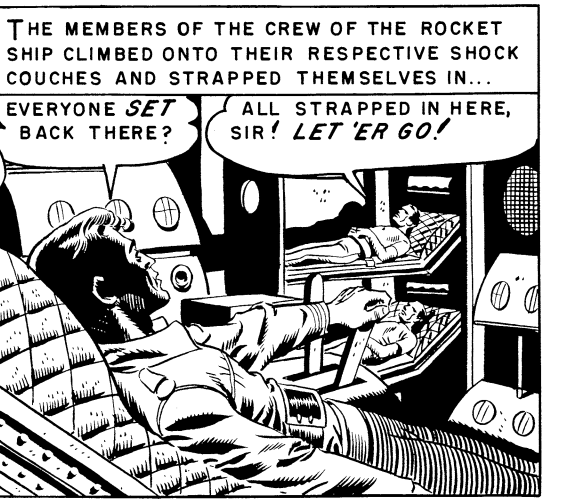
THE WORM TURNS
Joe Orlando
CAPTAIN BECKER MOVED THROUGH THE ROCKET SHIP TO THE CREW'S QUARTERS AS LAUGHTER DRIFTED TOWARD HIM FROM BEHIND ITS STEEL DOOR...
WELL! WHAT'S GOING ON? YOU GUYS SEEM TO BE ENJOYING YOURSELVES!
OH, CAPTAIN! COME IN! TAKE A LOOK! IT'S A RIOT!
CAPTAIN BECKER APPROACHED THE MESS TABLE AROUND WHICH SEVERAL MEMBERS OF THE CREW WERE GATHERED! ALL EYES WERE ON A NUMBER OF SMALL NUT-LIKE OBJECTS THAT ONE OF THE MEN HELD IN HIS HAND! EVERY SO OFTEN, ONE WOULD FLIP OVER OR LEAP SLIGHTLY INTO THE AIR...
WOW! THAT WAS A GOOD ONE!
WHAT'S THAT YOU HAVE THERE, VAUGHN?
MEXICAN JUMPING BEANS, SIR! I BOUGHT THEM BEFORE WE LEFT EARTH!

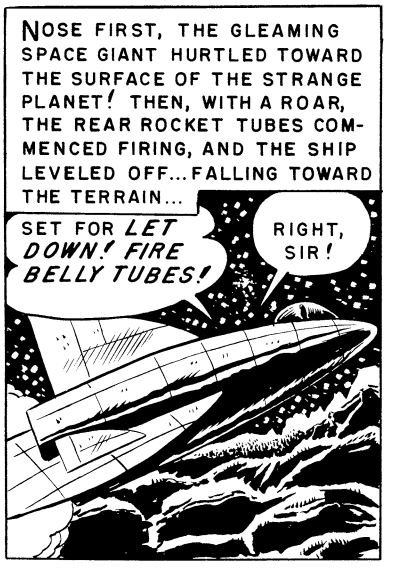
CAPTAIN BECKER STUDIED THE LEAPING, HOPPING, FLIP-FLOPPING BEANS IN VAUGHN'S PALM FOR SEVERAL SECONDS...
HMMMM! VERY INTERESTING... BUT CRUEL!
CRUEL, CAPTAIN? HOW COME?
YOU MEAN YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT MAKES A MEXICAN JUMPING BEAN JUMP?
NO, SIR! HOW DO THEY WORK?
WHEN THE BEAN IS GROWING ON THE BUSH, A LARVA OF SOME VARIETY OF MEXICAN MOTH BORES INTO IT FOR FOOD! THEN THE HOLE IS PLUGGED UP! THE HEAT FROM YOUR PALM MAKES THE LARVA INSIDE WRIGGLE... THEREBY MAKING THE BEAN JUMP!
YOU MEAN THERE'S A REAL LIVE WORM IN THAT BEAN, CAPTAIN?
EXACTLY!
SO WHAT'S SO CRUEL ABOUT WARMING UP A WORM?
IT'S ALL ACCORDING TO HOW YOU LOOK AT IT, VAUGHN! A WORM'S A LIVING CREATURE, TOO, YOU KNOW!
AW, COME ON, CAPTAIN! SAY! I'LL BET THEY'D REALLY JUMP SOME IF I PUT 'EM ON A HOTTER SURFACE!
HERMAN VAUGHN, THE OWNER OF THE CURIOUS LITTLE BEANS, REACHED FOR A METAL ASHTRAY ON THE MESS TABLE AND EMPTIED THE ROUND NUTS INTO IT! THEN HE STRUCK A MATCH...
IF YOU GENTLEMEN WILL EXCUSE ME!
SURE, CAPTAIN! SEE YOU!
HEY! WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO, VAUGHN?
AS CAPTAIN BECKER LEFT THE CREW'S QUARTERS, VAUGHN WAVED THE LIT MATCH UNDER THE ASHTRAY, AND THE JUMPING BEANS BEGAN TO LEAP HIGH IN THE AIR...
LOOK AT 'EM, NOW!
YAHOOOO!
THE OLD MAN DOESN'T APPROVE, EH, VAUGHN!
2

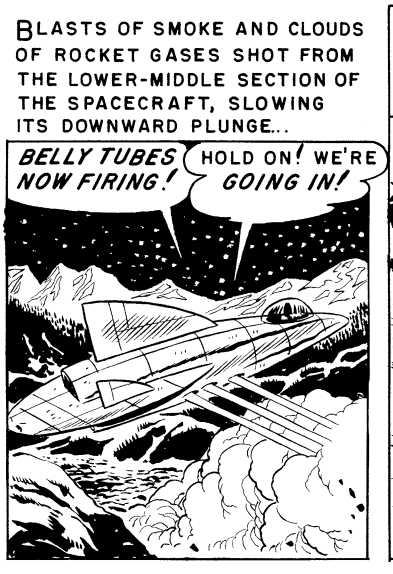

AW, HE'S ALWAYS PREACHING!
KINDA SILLY, IF YOU ASK ME! CRUELTY TO WORMS! HAH!
ATTENTION! ATTENTION!...ALL HANDS! WE ARE NOW APPROACHING PLANET 4, SOLAR SYSTEM 319! PREPARE FOR LANDING! TO YOUR PLACES!


AS THE SHIP'S P.A. SYSTEM DRONED OVERHEAD, VAUGHN POCKETED HIS JUMPING BEANS WHILE THE OTHERS SCURRIED OFF TO THEIR APPOINTED STATIONS...
THIS IS IT, MEN! LET'S GO!
TIME NOW, 0215! LANDING TIME, 0300! REPEAT...LANDING TIME, 0300!

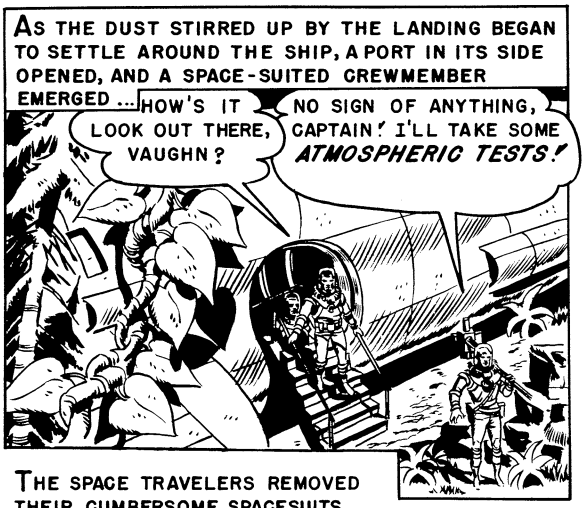

CAPTAIN BECKER'S HUGE GALACTIC-EXPLORATION ROCKET STREAKED TOWARD THE GLOWING ORANGE SPHERE LOOMING LARGER AND LARGER BEFORE THEM...
THERE IT IS! I WONDER WHETHER THERE'S ANY LIFE ON IT!
WE'LL SOON SEE! WE LAND IN THIRTY MINUTES! LET'S GET STRAPPED IN!


THE MEMBERS OF THE CREW OF THE ROCKET SHIP CLIMBED ONTO THEIR RESPECTIVE SHOCK COUCHES AND STRAPPED THEMSELVES IN...
EVERYONE SET BACK THERE?
ALL STRAPPED IN HERE, SIR! LET 'ER GO!


NOSE FIRST, THE GLEAMING SPACE GIANT HURTLED TOWARD THE SURFACE OF THE STRANGE PLANET! THEN, WITH A ROAR, THE REAR ROCKET TUBES COMMENCED FIRING, AND THE SHIP LEVELED OFF...FALLING TOWARD THE TERRAIN...
SET FOR LET DOWN! FIRE BELLY TUBES!
RIGHT, SIR!


BLASTS OF SMOKE AND CLOUDS OF ROCKET GASES SHOT FROM THE LOWER-MIDDLE SECTION OF THE SPACECRAFT, SLOWING ITS DOWNWARD PLUNGE...
BELLY TUBES NOW FIRING!
HOLD ON! WE'RE GOING IN!

WITH A FINAL BLAST, THE HUGE ROCKET BUMPED GENTLY TO REST ON THE PLANET'S SURFACE...
WE'RE DOWN!
EVERYONE ALL RIGHT BACK THERE?
OKAY, SIR!
3


AS THE DUST STIRRED UP BY THE LANDING BEGAN TO SETTLE AROUND THE SHIP, A PORT IN ITS SIDE OPENED, AND A SPACE-SUITED CREWMEMBER EMERGED ...
HOW'S IT LOOK OUT THERE, VAUGHN?
NO SIGN OF ANYTHING, CAPTAIN! I'LL TAKE SOME ATMOSPHERIC TESTS!

SEVERAL OTHER SPACE-SUIT CLAD MEN SCAMPERED DOWN THE LADDER! THEY CROWDED AROUND VAUGHN...
WELL, WHAT'S THE WORD?
GOOD! OXYGEN CONTENT... HIGH! PRESSURE... 14.3!
EXCELLENT!
NO NEED FOR SUITS!

THE SPACE TRAVELERS REMOVED THEIR CUMBERSOME SPACESUITS AND LOOKED ABOUT! NEARBY, STRANGE FOLIAGE LOOMED UP HUNDREDS OF FEET INTO THE AIR! SCATTERED AMONG ITS BRANCHES WERE SEVERAL LARGE SPHERICAL SHAPES...
WHAT DO YOU MAKE OF THAT, CORWIN?
LOOKS LIKE LARGE FRUIT GROWING ON A HUGE VINE!

SUDDENLY, THE GROUND BELOW THEIR FEET BEGAN TO TREMBLE! FROM FAR OFF CAME A SERIES OF SHORT RUMBLINGS...
WHAT'S THAT?
SOMETHING IS COMING!
LET'S GET BACK TO THE SHIP!

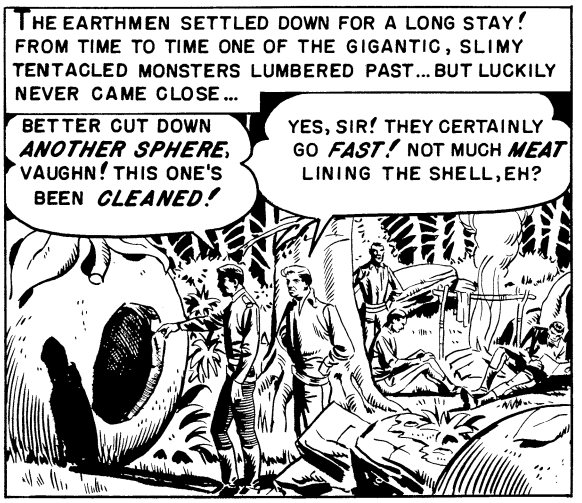
WAIT! TOO LATE! LOOK!
GOOD LORD!
IT... IT'S TREMENDOUS!

THE GIGANTIC SHAPE MOVED TOWARD THEM... THE GROUND VIBRATING! IT BLOTTED OUT THE SKY... TOWERING OVER THE HORRIFIED SPACE EXPLORERS LIKE SOME HIDEOUS, LIVING, SLIME-COVERED, TENTACLED MOUNTAIN...
THE SHIP!
IT'S HEADED FOR THE SHIP! OH, MY GOD! LOOK OUT!

SUDDENLY, THE SHIP WAS CRUSHED FLAT WITH A SPLINTERING ROAR BY AN APPENDAGE OF THE MONSTROUS THING...
JENKINS! PADGETT! HURLEY! THEY'RE STILL IN THERE!
THEY'RE DONE FOR!! NOTHING COULD'VE SURVIVED THAT...
4

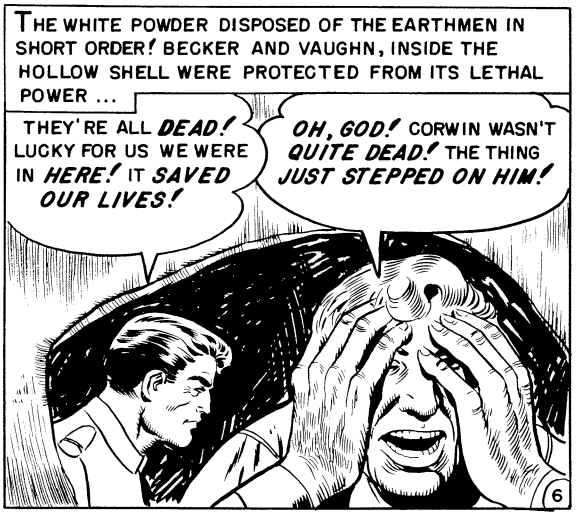
THE THING LUMBERED OFF TOWARD THE HORIZON AND DISAPPEARED! THE WRECKAGE OF THE SHIP LAY STREWN ABOUT LIKE PIECES OF TORN PAPER...
WE'RE STRANDED HERE!
OUR FOOD SUPPLY!
KEEP BACK! IT'S AFIRE!
SUDDENLY, THERE WAS A BLINDING EXPLOSION...
THE POWER PLANT'S HYDROGEN STORAGE TANKS MUST HAVE GIVEN WAY AND BEEN IGNITED!
THERE'S NOTHING LEFT NOW! NOTHING!
LATER, WHEN THE EXPLODED WRECKAGE OF THE ROCKET SHIP HAD COOLED, THE SURVIVING SPACE TRAVELERS SEARCHED THE REMAINS...
NOT A BIT OF FOOD TO BE SALVAGED!
WE'LL STARVE TO DEATH!
WHAT ABOUT THE FRUIT GROWING UP THERE, CORWIN?
IT MIGHT BE EDIBLE, CAPTAIN! LET'S TAKE A LOOK!
C'MON!
I'LL CLIMB UP AND CUT ONE DOWN, SIR!
ONE OF THE LARGE SPHERE-LIKE FRUITS THAT GREW ON THE TOWERING FOLIAGE WAS CUT DOWN! IT FELL TO THE GROUND WITH A DULL THUD! IT WAS ABOUT TEN FEET IN DIAMETER! THE EARTHMEN EXAMINED IT CAREFULLY...
I DON'T KNOW, SIR! IT HAS AN AWFULLY HARD SHELL! THERE'S A SMALL SOFT SPOT NEAR THE TOP, THOUGH!
TRY CUTTING THROUGH IT! PERHAPS IT HAS EDIBLE MEAT INSIDE!
A SMALL APERTURE WAS CUT IN THE SOFT SECTION OF THE FRUIT'S HARD SHELL...
IT'S HOLLOW INSIDE! I CAN'T CUT THE REST OF THE SHELL OPEN! WE'LL HAVE TO CRAWL IN THROUGH THIS SMALL HOLE!
LOOK, SIR! THERE'S A WHITE PULPY SUBSTANCE LINING THE HUNK WE CUT OUT!
5

VAUGHN SCRAPED OFF A BIT OF THE WHITE PULP...
SMELLS ALL RIGHT!
TASTE IT!
MMMM! NOT BAD! TASTES LIKE PEANUT BUTTER!
HERE! LET ME TRY!
IT IS GOOD!
WELL, THAT SOLVES OUR FOOD PROBLEM! NOW ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS TRY AND STAY ALIVE UNTIL A RESCUE SHIP COMES FOR US...
YOU HOPE!


THE EARTHMEN SETTLED DOWN FOR A LONG STAY! FROM TIME TO TIME ONE OF THE GIGANTIC, SLIMY TENTACLED MONSTERS LUMBERED PAST... BUT LUCKILY NEVER CAME CLOSE...
BETTER CUT DOWN ANOTHER SPHERE, VAUGHN! THIS ONE'S BEEN CLEANED!
YES, SIR! THEY CERTAINLY GO FAST! NOT MUCH MEAT LINING THE SHELL, EH?

ONE DAY, AS CAPTAIN BECKER AND HERMAN VAUGHN WERE INSIDE ONE OF THE SPHERES SCRAPING THE PULPY MEAT FROM ITS HARD SHELL...
WHAT'S THAT? LISTEN! THE GROUND'S SHAKING! TAKE A LOOK!
ONE OF THOSE THINGS IS COMING!

THE TREMENDOUS MONSTER LOOMED UP OVER THE FLEEING MEN! BECKER AND VAUGHN WATCHED IN HORROR AS IT UNLEASHED A CLOUD OF WHITE POWDER-LIKE MATERIAL UPON THEM...
YAAAAAAAAAAH!
IT'S SPRAYING THE OTHERS WITH THAT WHITE STUFF!
THE STUFF IS KILLING THEM ON CONTACT!

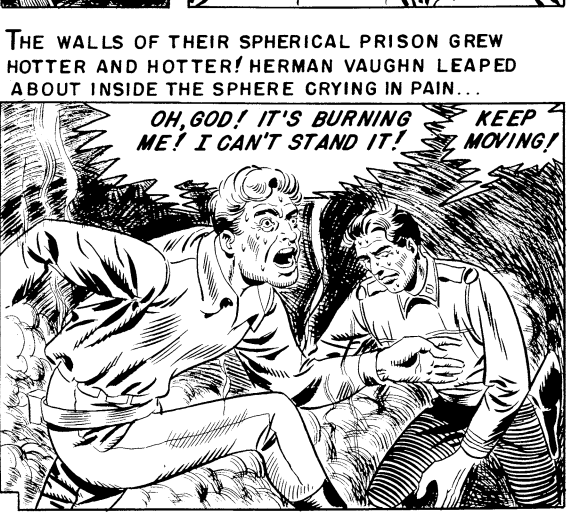

THE WHITE POWDER DISPOSED OF THE EARTHMEN IN SHORT ORDER! BECKER AND VAUGHN, INSIDE THE HOLLOW SHELL WERE PROTECTED FROM ITS LETHAL POWER ...
THEY'RE ALL DEAD! LUCKY FOR US WE WERE IN HERE! IT SAVED OUR LIVES!
OH, GOD! CORWIN WASN'T QUITE DEAD! THE THING JUST STEPPED ON HIM!
6

SUDDENLY VAUGHN JUMPED BACK FROM THE SMALL OPENING IN THE SHELL...
WHAT'S WRONG?
THE THING'S COMING TOWARD US!

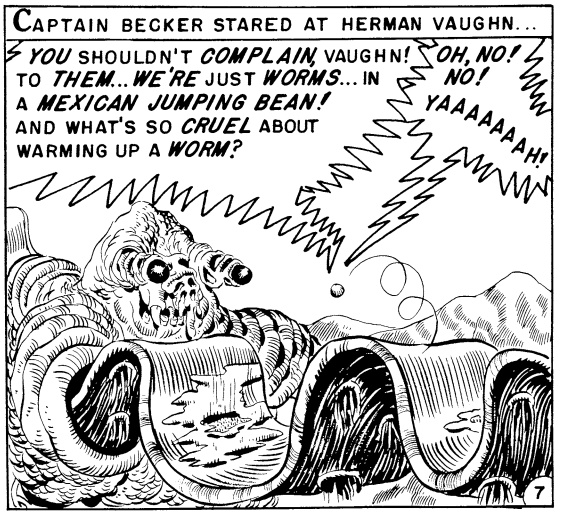
THE TWO EARTHMEN WERE THROWN VIOLENTLY OFF THEIR FEET AS A LARGE ROCK WAS WEDGED INTO THE OPENING...
IT'S PLUGGING UP THE OPENING!
WE'RE TRAPPED!

WE'RE BEING LIFTED! I CAN FEEL IT!
I CAN'T STAND UP!

THEN, SOMETHING STRANGE BEGAN TO HAPPEN...
THE CRUST! IT'S GETTING HOT!
I CAN'T TOUCH IT!


THE WALLS OF THEIR SPHERICAL PRISON GREW HOTTER AND HOTTER! HERMAN VAUGHN LEAPED ABOUT INSIDE THE SPHERE CRYING IN PAIN...
OH, GOD! IT'S BURNING ME! I CAN'T STAND IT!
KEEP MOVING!

THE TRAPPED EARTHMEN WRITHED ABOUT INSIDE THE SHELL... RECOILING IN PAIN FROM THE HOT WALLS... LEAPING... ROLLING... LIFTING THE TEN-FOOT SPHERE INTO THE AIR WITH THEIR MOVEMENT...
CAPTAIN! WHAT ARE THEY DOING TO US? THEY'RE TORTURING US!
GOOD LORD! I KNOW! I KNOW!

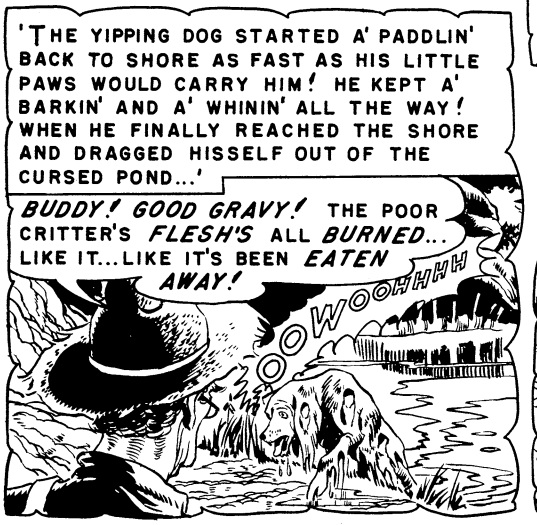

CAPTAIN BECKER STARED AT HERMAN VAUGHN...
YOU SHOULDN'T COMPLAIN, VAUGHN! TO THEM... WE'RE JUST WORMS... IN A MEXICAN JUMPING BEAN! AND WHAT'S SO CRUEL ABOUT WARMING UP A WORM?
OH, NO! NO! YAAAAAAAH!
7

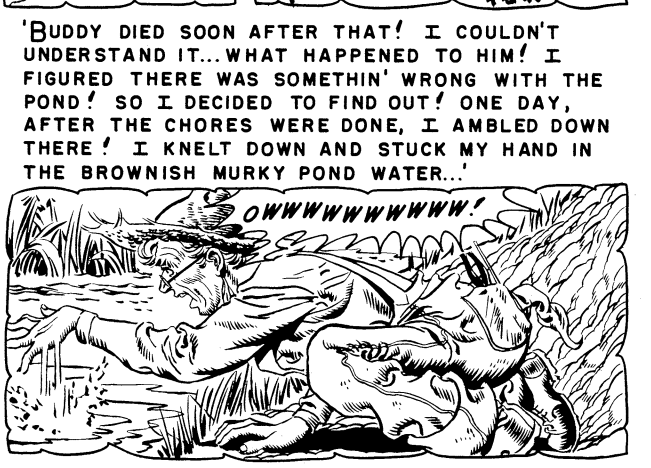
THE THING IN THE CAVE
THE POND SHIMMERED IN THE MORNING SUNLIGHT! TO MICHAEL RUSSEL, THE YOUNG CHEMIST, IT LOOKED LIKE ANY OTHER OF THE HUNDREDS OF PONDS THAT DOTTED THE MASSACHUSETTS SEACOAST. BUT THERE WAS SOMETHING DIFFERENT ABOUT THIS PARTICULAR POND... SOMETHING FRIGHTENING...
THERE SHE IS, MR. RUSSEL! BE CAREFUL! DON'T GO TOO NEAR IT!
YOU'D BETTER TELL ME ALL YOU CAN ABOUT IT, MR. DORSEY! START AT THE BEGINNING!
THE WEATHERBEATEN FARMER THAT STOOD AT MIKE'S SIDE MUSED FOR A MOMENT, LIFTED HIS STRAW HAT, SCRATCHED HIS GREYING HEAD, AND THEN BEGAN...
USED TO BE A PRETTY GOOD WATERIN' HOLE BACK WHEN I FUST BOUGHT THE PLACE! HAD SOME NICE FISH IN IT, TOO! 'BOUT TWO YEARS AGO, THE FISHIN' TAPERED OFF, THOUGH! COULDN'T CATCH A CATFISH, EVEN! THEY ALL SEEMED TO HAVE UPPED AND DIED OFF!
DID YOU TRY STOCKING IT AGAIN?
Joe Orlando
1

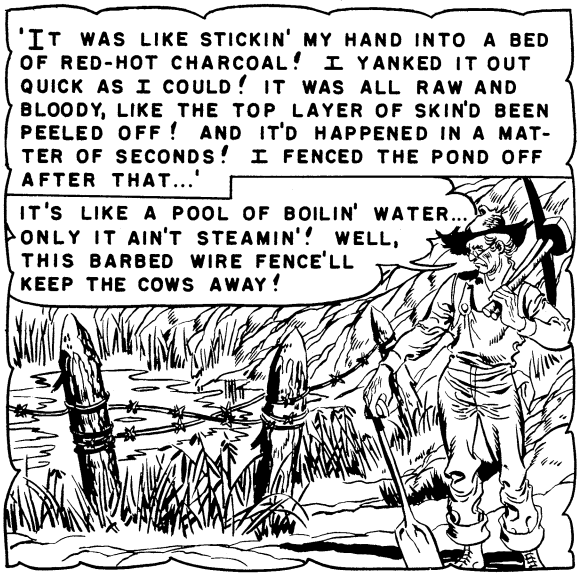
YEP! 'TWAREN'T NO USE, THOUGH! FISH JUST WOULDN'T LIVE IN IT! THEN... 'BOUT A YEAR AGO, THE FIRST BAD THING HAPPENED!
WHAT WAS THAT, MR. DORSEY?

'HAD A DOG BACK THEN! BEST BIRD-DOG I EVER OWNED! CALLED HIM "BUDDY"! ONE DAY, BUDDY TOOK A NOTION TO TAKE A SWIM IN THE POND! AS I RECALL, IT WAS A MIGHTY HOT DAY...'
HEY, THERE, BUDDY! WHERE YOU GOIN', BOY? OH! GOIN' TO TAKE A LITTLE DIP, EH?
WOOF! WOOF!

'BUDDY LOPED OFF DOWN THE PATH AND SCAMPERED RIGHT PLUMB INTO THE POND! ALL OF A SUDDEN, THE POOR DOG STARTED A' HOWLIN' AND A' BAYIN' LIKE HE WAS IN PAIN...'
BUDDY! WHAT IS IT, BOY?
YIIIIIII! YIP! YIIIIIIII! YIIIII!


'THE YIPPING DOG STARTED A' PADDLIN' BACK TO SHORE AS FAST AS HIS LITTLE PAWS WOULD CARRY HIM! HE KEPT A' BARKIN' AND A' WHININ' ALL THE WAY! WHEN HE FINALLY REACHED THE SHORE AND DRAGGED HISSELF OUT OF THE CURSED POND...'
BUDDY! GOOD GRAVY! THE POOR CRITTER'S FLESH'S ALL BURNED... LIKE IT... LIKE IT'S BEEN EATEN AWAY!
OOWOOHHHH


'BUDDY DIED SOON AFTER THAT! I COULDN'T UNDERSTAND IT... WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM! I FIGURED THERE WAS SOMETHIN' WRONG WITH THE POND! SO I DECIDED TO FIND OUT! ONE DAY, AFTER THE CHORES WERE DONE, I AMBLED DOWN THERE! I KNELT DOWN AND STUCK MY HAND IN THE BROWNISH MURKY POND WATER...'
OWWWWWWWWW!


'IT WAS LIKE STICKIN' MY HAND INTO A BED OF RED-HOT CHARCOAL! I YANKED IT OUT QUICK AS I COULD! IT WAS ALL RAW AND BLOODY, LIKE THE TOP LAYER OF SKIN'D BEEN PEELED OFF! AND IT'D HAPPENED IN A MATTER OF SECONDS! I FENCED THE POND OFF AFTER THAT...'
IT'S LIKE A POOL OF BOILIN' WATER... ONLY IT AIN'T STEAMIN'! WELL, THIS BARBED WIRE FENCE'LL KEEP THE COWS AWAY!

'I FIGURED MAYBE SOME UNDERGROUND SPRING HAD OPENED UP AND FILLED THE POND WITH THEM MINERAL WATERS I READ ABOUT! THEN, 'BOUT SIX MONTHS AGO, ONE OF MY PRIZE HEIFERS KNOCKED DOWN THE FENCE AND AMBLED INTO THE POND TO TAKE A DRINK! I WAS WORKIN' IN THE SOUTH FIELD WHEN I HEARD HER BELLOW! I FOUND HER... WHAT WAS LEFT OF HER...'
LEAPIN' TOADSTOOLS! THE MEAT'S BEEN CLEANED FROM HER FORELEGS AND SNOOT!
2

'SHE'D PROBABLY STEPPED DOWN INTO THE STUFF AND STUCK HER SNOOT INTO IT TO DRINK! SHE WAS LAYIN' ALONGSIDE THE POOL... KICKIN' AND BELLOWIN'! AFTER A WHILE SHE DIED! THAT NIGHT I REPAIRED THE FENCE AND REINFORCED IT...'

BLASTED POND! *FIRST* MY *BEST HOUND DOG* AND NOW MY *PRIZE HEIFER!*

'THEN, YESTERDAY, THE WORST THING HAPPENED! I'D HIRED AN EXTRA HAND TO HELP WITH THE POTATO HARVEST, AND I GUESS HE TOOK A NOTION TO GO FOR A SWIM! I HAD FORGOTTEN TO WARN HIM...'

YAAAAAAAAAA!

WHEN I GOT TO HIM, ALL THAT WAS LEFT WAS ONE HAND CLAWIN' AT THE POND EDGE! DOWN WHERE THE WATER LAPPED AT IT, I COULD SEE THE WHITE BONE DISSOLVING!

AFTER I GOT OVER BEIN' SICK, I PHONED YOU!

WHEW! THAT'S SOME STORY, MR. DORSEY!

IT'S *TRUE*, MR. RUSSEL! *EVERY WORD!* YOU *COUNTY* BOYS BETTER *DO* SOMETHIN' ABOUT THIS!

I'LL TAKE A *SAMPLE* BACK TO THE *LAB*, MR. DORSEY! YOU SIT TIGHT TILL WE *ANALYZE* THE STUFF! I'LL CALL YOU IN THE MORNING!

MIKE RUSSEL, OF THE COUNTY HEALTH BOARD'S CHEMICAL LABORATORY, WENT TO HIS STATION WAGON AND TOOK OUT A LARGE GLASS BEAKER ABOUT FIFTEEN INCHES DEEP AND TWELVE INCHES IN DIAMETER! THEN HE WITHDREW A PORCELAIN LADLE! HE CARRIED THE BEAKER AND THE LADLE TO THE POND EDGE...

BE CAREFUL, MR. RUSSEL! IF ONE DROP GETS ON YOUR HAND...

DON'T WORRY, MR. DORSEY! AFTER WHAT YOU TOLD ME... I'LL BE *EXTRA* CAREFUL!

LATER THAT DAY, MIKE SLIPPED CAUTIOUSLY THROUGH THE DOOR TO THE HEALTH BOARD'S LABORATORY HOLDING THE GLASS BEAKER IN HIS OUTSTRETCHED RUBBER-GLOVED HANDS! DONALD FORTE, MIKE'S LAB ASSISTANT, TURNED FROM THE ROWS OF TEST TUBES AS HE ENTERED...

HI, MIKE! WHAT YOU GOT THERE? SOME OF OLD MAN DORSEY'S POND WATER?

THAT'S RIGHT! AND WAIT TILL YOU HEAR THE FANTASTIC STORY HE TOLD ME!

AFTER MIKE HAD RELATED FARMER DORSEY'S STORY TO DON, THEY BOTH EYED THE GLASS BEAKER THOUGHTFULLY...

THINK MAYBE SOME FREAK CHEMICAL CHANGE TOOK PLACE, MIKE, AND THE WATER IN THE POND TURNED TO ACID?

HARDLY LIKELY, DON! GET ME A HUNK OF MEAT FROM THE REFRIGERATOR! I WANT TO TRY SOMETHING!

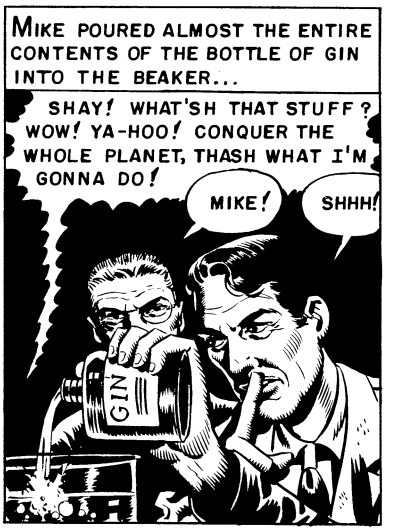
3

THE MEAT WAS BROUGHT! MIKE DROPPED IT GINGERLY INTO THE GLASS BEAKER, AVOIDING SPLASHING! THE MEAT SANK INTO THE MURKY LIQUID AND IMMEDIATELY BEGAN TO DECOMPOSE...
LOOK AT IT, MIKE! THE MEAT'S DISSOLVING! IT'S BURNING UP!
NO! IT'S NOT BURNING UP, DON! IT'S BEING ASSIMILATED... DIGESTED! SEE! THERE'S NO REACTION PRODUCTS! GET ME A MICROSCOPE SLIDE, DON!
A DROP OF THE POND WATER WAS PLACED ON A SLIDE AND MIKE STUDIED IT FOR A FEW MOMENTS UNDER A POWERFUL MICROSCOPE...
ANY SIGN OF ANIMAL LIFE, MIKE? ANY AMOEBAE OR PARAMECIA?
DON! THERE'S NO ANIMAL LIFE IN THE DROP OF WATER! THE WHOLE DROP IS BEHAVING LIKE AN AMOEBA!
MIKE STARED AT THE GLASS BEAKER CONTAINING THE MURKY POND WATER...
THE STUFF IN THAT BEAKER ISN'T WATER, DON! IT'S ALIVE! IT'S A MASS OF LIVING PROTOPLASMIC SUBSTANCE!
GOOD LORD! ARE YOU SURE?
WE CAN TEST IT TO SEE IF IT'S GIVING OFF ANY ELECTRICAL CURRENT! CRIPES! I WISH WE HAD SOME DECENT EQUIPMENT IN THIS JOINT!
HOW ABOUT USING MY HAM-RADIO EQUIPMENT? I HAVE A VOLT AMMETER!
DON RUSHED TO THE CLOSET WHERE HE KEPT HIS HAM-RADIO EQUIPMENT AND RETURNED WITH A VOLT AMMETER AND TWO LENGTHS OF WIRE! THE WIRES WERE CONNECTED TO THE POLES OF THE METER AND PLUNGED INTO THE BEAKER...
LOOK! THE STUFF IS EATING OFF THE INSULATION!
BUT THERE'S CURRENT COMING FROM IT! SEE! FAINT... BUT IT'S THERE!
DON STUDIED THE VOLT AMMETER...
THE CURRENT ISN'T STEADY! IT KEEPS CHANGING! IT SEEMS ALMOST LIKE A SIGNAL! HEY! I GOT AN IDEA!
WHAT, DON?
DON HURRIED TO HIS CLOSET AND RETURNED WITH AN AMPLIFIER AND SPEAKER...
MAYBE WE CAN TURN THAT VARYING CURRENT INTO AUDIBLE SOUND! IT MIGHT BE INTERESTING!
WHAT GOOD WILL THAT DO? WHAT WE NEED IS AN OSCILLOSCOPE TO SHOW US ANY PATTERN!
4

DON HOOKED THE AMPLIFIER AND SPEAKER UNIT TO THE POLES OF THE VOLT AMMETER! AS HE MADE THE FINAL CONNECTION, THE SPEAKER BLASTED...
FOR CRYIN' OUT LOUD, TURN DOWN THE VOLUME!
WHAT THE...?
HEY! AW, YOU KIDDIN' AROUND, DON?
NO, MIKE! HONESTLY...
PLEASE, YOU GUYS! YOU'VE GOT A LIVE MIKE ON THAT AMPLIFIER, AND IT'S BLASTING MY AUDITORY CELLS!
IT'S THE STUFF, DON! IT TALKS!
OF COURSE I TALK! NOW... THE VOLUME, IF YOU DON'T MIND!
OH! SURE! THERE!
THAT'S BETTER!
...WHAT ... WHAT ARE YOU?
WHERE DID YOU COME FROM? HOW DID YOU LEARN ENGLISH?
I'M NOT SURE HOW I STARTED! ALL I KNOW IS I'M A NEW LIFE-FORM... FAR MORE INTELLIGENT THAN YOURS! I LEARNED TO TALK BY ABSORBING THE MEMORY PATTERN OF THE HUMAN THAT UNFORTUNATELY CAME IN CONTACT WITH ME! WHAT YOU HAVE HERE IS JUST A SMALL PART OF ME! THE REST IS IN THE POOL!
WHEN THIS PORTION OF ME IS RETURNED TO THE POOL, EVERYTHING 'I' HAVE LEARNED WILL BECOME PART OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE WHOLE! I CAN HELP YOU... I CAN HELP THE WHOLE HUMAN RACE... IF YOU'LL LET ME!
HOW?
I CAN SOLVE PROBLEMS THAT HAVE BAFFLED YOUR INADEQUATE MINDS FOR GENERATIONS! ALL I NEED IS THE INFORMATION... THE EDUCATION! TELL ME ABOUT THE WORLD! I ALREADY KNOW HOW IT FEELS FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF A DOG... HOW IT SMELLS FROM A COW'S... WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE FROM THE EYES OF A RATHER IGNORANT FARM-HAND...
WHAT I NEED IS TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE... YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF THE UNIVERSE... WHAT HAPPENED? YOU CUT OFF THE MIKE! I CAN'T HEAR YOU?...
DON! THIS THING IS DANGEROUS!
CLICK!
DON'T BE SILLY, MIKE! IT COULD BE A BOON TO MANKIND!
DON! I DON'T TRUST IT!
HEY! I'M GETTING HUNGRY AGAIN! HOW ABOUT SOME MORE OF THAT MEAT YOU GAVE ME BEFORE?
5

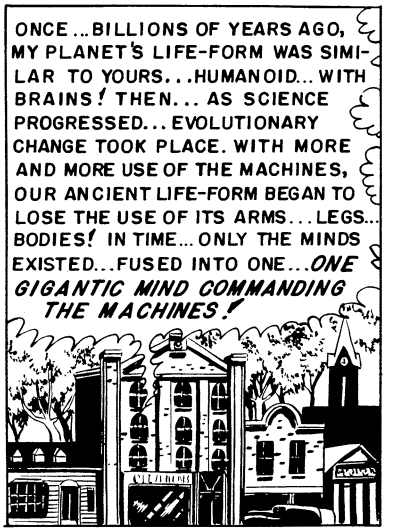
HOLD IT, DON! I HAVE AN IDEA! I STILL FEEL THIS... THIS THING IS LYING TO US...AND I'M GOING TO FIND OUT!
HOW? WHAT'S YOUR PLAN, MIKE?
HEY! HOW ABOUT IT?

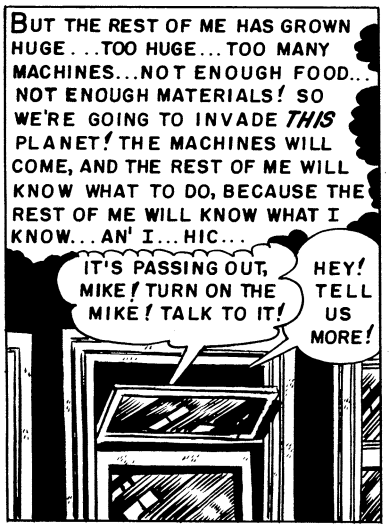
MIKE OPENED A CABINET AND BROUGHT OUT A QUART BOTTLE OF CLEAR LIQUID...
THEY SAY WHEN YOU'RE *DRUNK*, YOUR *DEFENSES* ARE DOWN...SO...
GIN!
C'MON! TURN ON THE MIKE AGAIN!


MIKE POURED ALMOST THE ENTIRE CONTENTS OF THE BOTTLE OF GIN INTO THE BEAKER...
SHAY! WHAT'SH THAT STUFF? WOW! YA-HOO! CONQUER THE WHOLE PLANET, THASH WHAT I'M GONNA DO!
MIKE!
SHHH!
GIN

LISHEN! I'LL TELL YOU GUYS A LI'L SECRET! THE *REST* OF ME AIN'T IN THE POND AT ALL! THAS JUST A *LI'L BIT* OF ME! THAS THE *FORWARD SCOUTING* OBSERVER! *MOSHT* OF ME'S *BACK THERE*.. ON MY *OWN PLANET!* GONNA *INVADE* THISH ONE PRETTY SHOON...
D'YA HEAR THAT, MIKE?
SHUT UP AND LISTEN!

SENT THISH PART DOWN IN A SPACE CAPSULE! THASH WHAT FORMED THE POND... WHEN THE CAPSULE HIT! TOOK YEARS FOR THE CAPSULE TO OXIDIZE AND LET ME OUT! I GREW FAST IN WATER! ATE FISH! IT'S MY JOB TO FIND OUT ALL ABOUT YOUR PLANET! THEN...WHEN THE REST OF ME COMES...THE *WHOLE* OF ME WILL KNOW WHAT THIS PART'S LEARNED!


ONCE...BILLIONS OF YEARS AGO, MY PLANET'S LIFE-FORM WAS SIMILAR TO YOURS...HUMANOID... WITH BRAINS! THEN... AS SCIENCE PROGRESSED... EVOLUTIONARY CHANGE TOOK PLACE. WITH MORE AND MORE USE OF THE MACHINES, OUR ANCIENT LIFE-FORM BEGAN TO LOSE THE USE OF ITS ARMS...LEGS... BODIES! IN TIME... ONLY THE MINDS EXISTED...FUSED INTO ONE...*ONE GIGANTIC MIND COMMANDING THE MACHINES!*


BUT THE REST OF ME HAS GROWN HUGE...TOO HUGE...TOO MANY MACHINES...NOT ENOUGH FOOD... NOT ENOUGH MATERIALS! SO WE'RE GOING TO INVADE *THIS* PLANET! THE MACHINES WILL COME, AND THE REST OF ME WILL KNOW WHAT TO DO, BECAUSE THE REST OF ME WILL KNOW WHAT I KNOW...AN' I...HIC...
IT'S PASSING OUT, MIKE! TURN ON THE MIKE! TALK TO IT!
HEY! TELL US MORE!

AN' I'M SO...TIRED.. I...THINK...I'LL... UH...
IT'S *OUT COLD!*
GOOD LORD, MIKE! WHAT WILL WE DO?

C'MON, DON! WE'VE GOT TO DESTROY WHAT'S IN THAT POOL!
HOW, MIKE?
6

SOON, FARMER DORSEY'S POND WAS COVERED WITH A MASS OF BURNING OIL! BLACK, BILLOWING SMOKE POURED UPWARD...
AFTER WE FINISH *THIS*, WE'LL GO BACK AND DESTROY THE *REST* OF IT IN THE BEAKER!

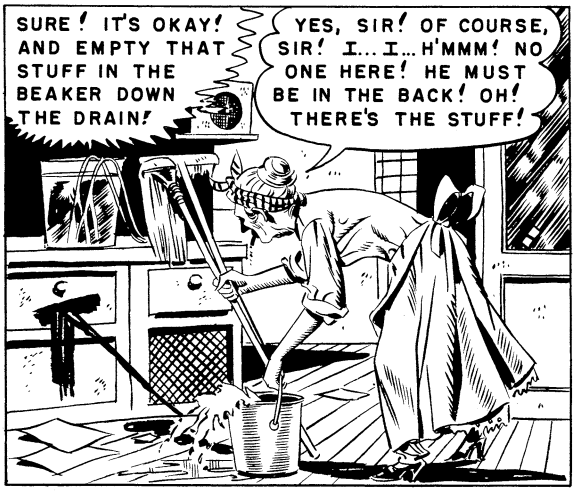
LITTLE BY LITTLE, THE CONTENT OF THE POOL WAS BURNED AWAY UNTIL NOTHING REMAINED...
THAT TAKES CARE OF *THIS* PART!
MIKE! DO YOU BELIEVE WHAT THE STUFF SAID... ABOUT THE INVASION?

I DON'T KNOW, DON! ANYWAY, IT WON'T BE ABLE TO HELP THE INVASION... IF IT DOES COME!
NO! NOT AFTER WE DESTROY THE LITTLE BIT THAT'S LEFT IN THE LAB!

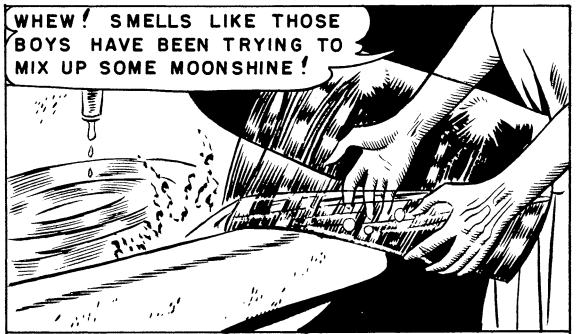
MEANWHILE, THE STUFF IN THE LAB CAME TO, AS THE EFFECT OF THE GIN WORE OFF! IT LISTENED INTENTLY! THE MIKE HAD BEEN LEFT ON...

THEY *DID* SOMETHING TO ME! I MUST HAVE *TALKED!* I'VE GOT TO GET AWAY! OH, OH! SOMEONE IS COMING!
MR. RUSSEL! IT'S *ME*... THE *CLEANING LADY!* OKAY IF I COME IN AND CLEAN?

THE MURKY THING IN THE GLASS BEAKER RESPONDED...


SURE! IT'S OKAY! AND EMPTY THAT STUFF IN THE BEAKER DOWN THE DRAIN!
YES, SIR! OF COURSE, SIR! I... I... H'MMM! NO ONE HERE! HE MUST BE IN THE BACK! OH! THERE'S THE STUFF!

THE DUPED WOMAN LIFTED THE BEAKER CONTAINING THE OUTER SPACE LIFE-FORM AND EMPTIED IT INTO THE SINK...



...AND WHAT A *KICK* IT'S GOING TO HAVE! THE SEWERAGE SYSTEM EMPTIES INTO THE *OCEAN*, YOU KNOW! AND THE OCEAN'S AN *AWFULLY BIG POND!*

-THE END-

THIS SCIENCE-FICTION STORY WITH ITS SURPRISE ENDING SHOULD GIVE YOU A JOLT!

THE MONSTERS!

THE HUGE GLEAMING NEEDLE-SHAPED SPACESHIP STOOD LIKE A GIGANTIC FINGER POINTING SKYWARD! ITS ROCKET TUBES STILL GLOWED RED HOT FROM THE LANDING THAT HAD JUST BEEN COMPLETED! OFF ON THE HORIZON, A TINY CLOUD OF DUST ROSE...DRIFTING LAZILY...KICKED UP BY A JEEP SPEEDING ACROSS THE ARID WASTES TOWARD THE ALIEN CRAFT...

LOOK AT IT! ISN'T IT MAGNIFICENT?
HURRY, HINKEL... HURRY!
I'M DRIVING AS FAST AS I CAN!
THINK OF IT! A SHIP FROM OUTER SPACE... EARTH'S FIRST VISITORS FROM ANOTHER WORLD!

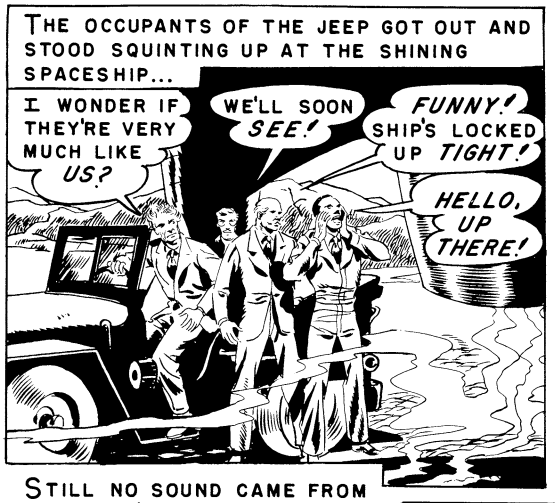
THE DUSTY JEEP WITH ITS FOUR OCCUPANTS BOUNCED AND ROLLED ON THE PARCHED NEW MEXICO DESERT SANDS, NEARING THE SILVER SPACE GIANT...

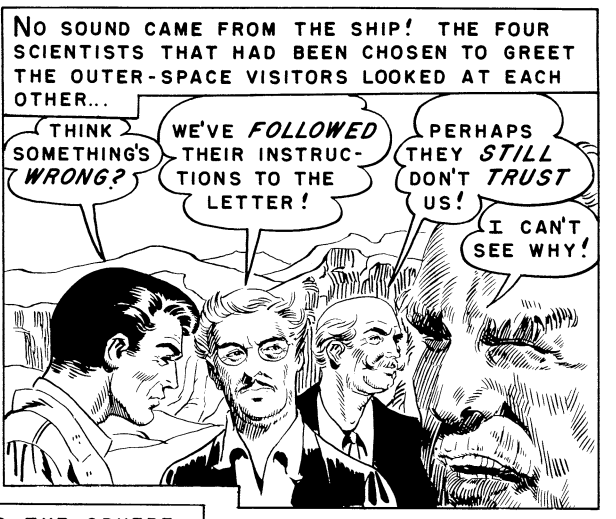
TO THINK...THAT THREE DAYS AGO, MOST OF US WERE DISCOUNTING THE THEORY THAT LIFE EXISTS ON OTHER PLANETS...IN OTHER SOLAR SYSTEMS...
YES! THEN THEY MADE RADIO CONTACT WITH US, AND SHOOK THE ENTIRE SCIENTIFIC WORLD!
9

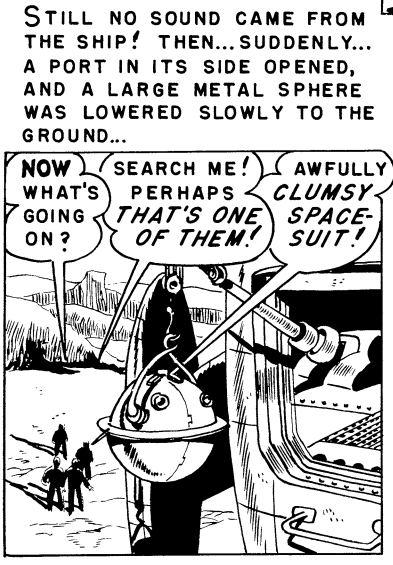
THE JEEP ROLLED TO A STOP BELOW THE TOWERING SHIP...

IT'S AMAZING HOW WELL THEY CAN SPEAK ENGLISH, CONSIDERING THAT THEY LEARNED IT ONLY BY THE FEW HOURS OF RADIO CONTACT THEY HAD WITH US!
IT APPEARS THAT EARTHMEN ARE NOT THE MOST INTELLIGENT BEINGS IN THIS GREAT UNIVERSE, EH, GENTLEMEN?
1

A SCIENCE-FICTION SUSPENSTORY


THE OCCUPANTS OF THE JEEP GOT OUT AND STOOD SQUINTING UP AT THE SHINING SPACESHIP...
I WONDER IF THEY'RE VERY MUCH LIKE US?
WE'LL SOON SEE!
FUNNY! SHIP'S LOCKED UP TIGHT!
HELLO, UP THERE!


NO SOUND CAME FROM THE SHIP! THE FOUR SCIENTISTS THAT HAD BEEN CHOSEN TO GREET THE OUTER-SPACE VISITORS LOOKED AT EACH OTHER...
I THINK SOMETHING'S WRONG?
WE'VE FOLLOWED THEIR INSTRUCTIONS TO THE LETTER!
PERHAPS THEY STILL DON'T TRUST US!
I CAN'T SEE WHY!

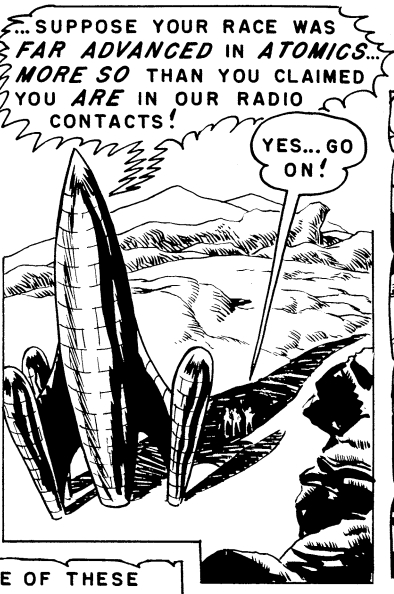

STILL NO SOUND CAME FROM THE SHIP! THEN...SUDDENLY... A PORT IN ITS SIDE OPENED, AND A LARGE METAL SPHERE WAS LOWERED SLOWLY TO THE GROUND...
NOW WHAT'S GOING ON?
SEARCH ME! PERHAPS THAT'S ONE OF THEM!
AWFULLY CLUMSY SPACE-SUIT!

AS SOON AS THE SPHERE TOUCHED THE SANDY SURFACE, A LOUDSPEAKER BOOMED FROM THE SPACECRAFT...
EARTHLINGS! GO BACK! WE ARE TAKING OFF!
NO! WAIT!

WHAT'S WRONG? LOOK! WE'RE NOT ARMED!
IT IS NOT YOUR FAULT! IT IS JUST THAT WE HAVE CHANGED OUR MINDS! WE ARE LEAVING!

BUT THERE MUST BE SOME EXPLANATION! WE SPENT THREE DAYS ARRANGING FOR THIS LANDING! ARE THERE TOO MANY OF US EARTHMEN HERE?
IT IS NOT THAT! YOU TOLD US YOU WOULD HAVE FOUR! NO, IT IS NOT THAT! NOW GET IN YOUR VEHICLE AND GO BACK!

BUT YOU ARE SO MUCH MORE ADVANCED SCIENTIFICALLY THAN WE! TO LET YOU GO NOW WOULD MEAN GIVING UP A THOUSAND YEARS OF PROGRESS FOR US ON EARTH! THERE IS SO MUCH YOU COULD TEACH US...SO MUCH WE COULD LEARN!
YES, IT IS REGRETTABLE... FOR YOU! PERHAPS WE CAN SIMPLIFY OUR REASONS FOR LEAVING SO YOU CAN UNDERSTAND THEM!
2



'SUPPOSE THAT ONE DAY... IN ONE OF YOUR ATOMIC LABORATORIES...'
GOOD LORD! LOOK AT THAT RADIATION READING!
THERE'S A LEAK SOMEWHERE! WE'VE ALL BEEN EXPOSED!

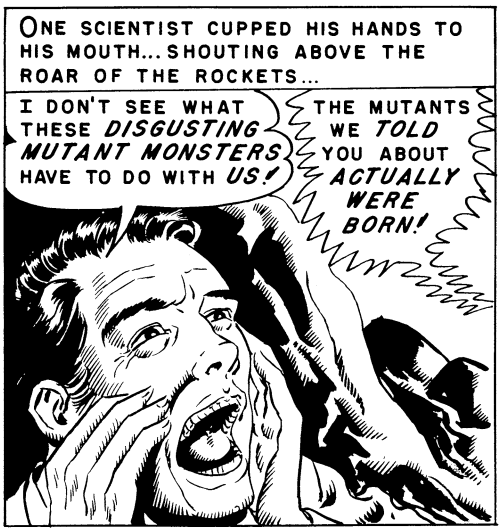
'SUPPOSE THAT LATER ON, ONE OF THESE SCIENTISTS THAT WAS EXPOSED TO THE RADIATIONS BECAME A FATHER...'
DOCTOR! WHAT IS IT? YOU'RE WHITE AS A SHEET! MY WIFE! MY WIFE IS...
NO, ALEX! YOUR WIFE IS FINE! IT... IT'S THE...THE BABY!
PRIVAT

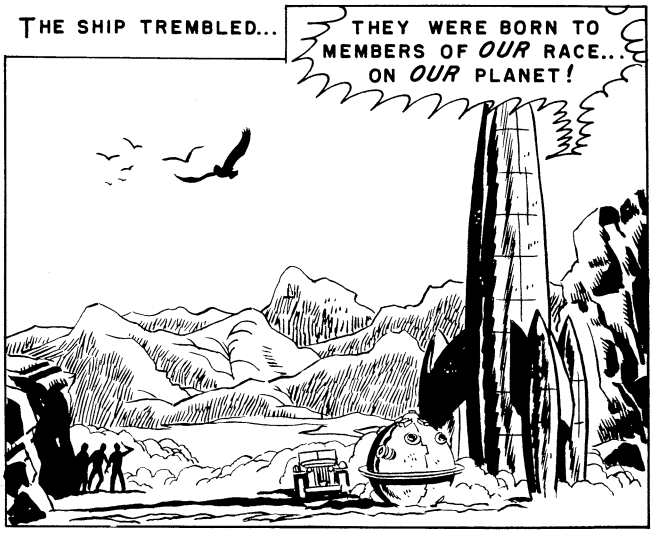
'THE NEW FATHER WAS SHOWN HIS INFANT CHILD...'

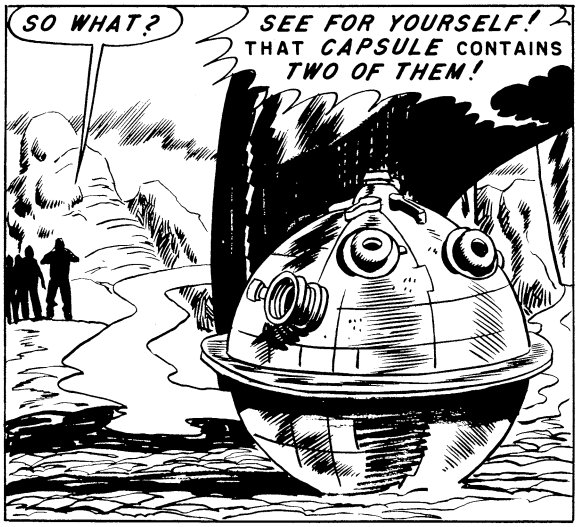
'AND THEN, LATER ON, A SECOND SCIENTIST THAT HAD ALSO BEEN EXPOSED TO THESE RADIATIONS BECAME A FATHER...'

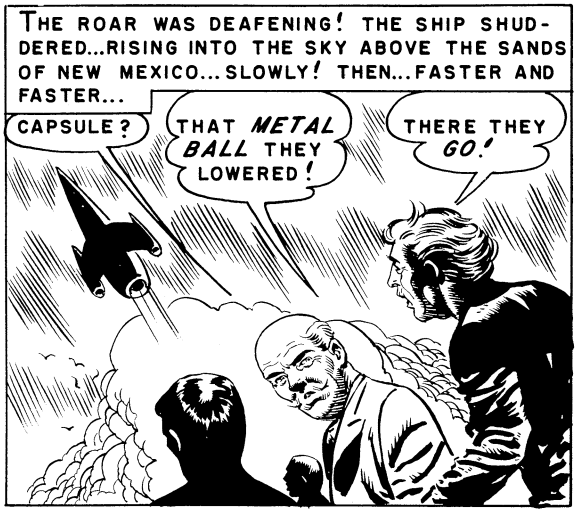
'AND SUPPOSE A THIRD MONSTROSITY WAS BORN TO ANOTHER OF THE SCIENTISTS THAT HAD WORKED IN THE SAME PLANT...'
THEY WARNED US NOT TO HAVE A CHILD! THEY TOLD ME ABOUT ALEX'S AND HERMAN'S...
THIS PROVES IT!
THESE...THESE THINGS ARE ATOMIC MUTANTS! THE RADIATION'S CAUSED THEM!
LORD! LOOK AT IT! IT...IT'S DISGUSTING!
'SUPPOSE THE THREE MUTANTS WERE TAKEN FROM THEIR PARENTS AND SENT TO THE GOVERNMENT LABORATORIES TO BE STUDIED...'
TAKE THIS DOWN, JENNINGS! DESCRIPTION OF ATOMIC MUTANT...LAB REPORT NUMBER ONE-SEVEN-FIVE-FOUR! AGE...ONE YEAR...
MUTANT HAS AN OVERSIZED BULBOUS HEAD! VISUAL ORGANS ARE TINY AND DEEP SET... COVERED WITH A SLIMY LIQUID! BETWEEN THE VISUAL ORGANS, A LARGE POINTED OLFACTORY ORGAN EXTENDS OUTWARD SHARPLY! AT THE FAR END OF THIS PROBOSCIS ARE TWO LARGE VENTS FRINGED WITH FINE CILIA! BELOW THIS, A TREMENDOUS CAVITY LINED WITH MUCOUS MEMBRANE CONTAINING A PROTRUSIBLE ORGAN COVERED WITH TINY WART-LIKE GROWTHS!
HARD, BONY APPENDAGES OF VARIED SHAPES JUT FROM THIS CAVITY AT ITS EXTREME EDGES...TOP AND BOTTOM! MUTANT'S HIDE IS POROUS AND COVERED WITH SLENDER, THREAD-LIKE FILAMENTS! HIDE...COARSE AND THICK! FREQUENTLY HIDE BECOMES DRENCHED WITH FOUL-SMELLING ACIDS WHICH OOZE FROM POROUS OPENINGS! OTHER LIQUIDS OOZE FROM OLFACTORY ORGAN AND MUCOUS-MEMBRANED CAVITY!
BODY OF MUTANT IS SHORT AND CYLINDRICAL WITH FOUR TRIPLE-SECTIONED APPENDAGES! EACH TRIPLE-SECTIONED APPENDAGE HAS SEVERAL ADDITIONAL TRIPLE-SECTIONED APPENDAGES PROTRUDING FROM IT! THESE END APPENDAGES ARE EACH ARMED WITH A HORNY SCALE RESEMBLING A TALON!
MOVEMENTS OF MUTANT ARE AWKWARD AND... AND... JENNINGS! WHAT'S WRONG?
I...I DON'T FEEL SO GOOD, DOCTOR!
4

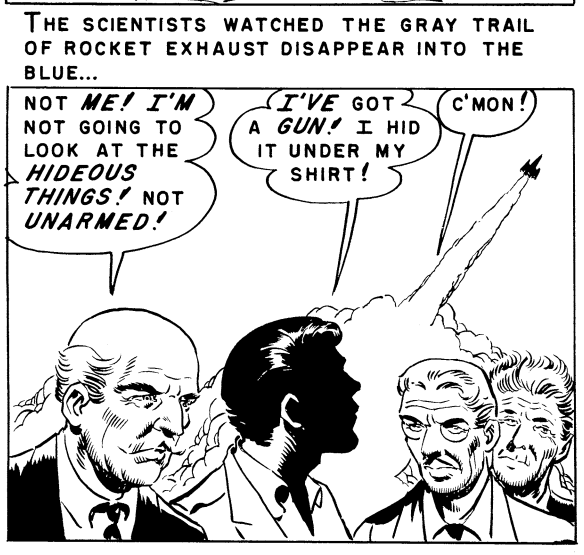
'SUPPOSE THE GOVERNMENT LABORATORIES RAISED THE MUTANTS...STUDYING THEM CLOSELY..'
MUTANTS ARE CARNIVOROUS... FEEDING ON OTHER FORMS OF ANIMAL LIFE FOR SUSTENANCE!
UGH!
BEER 15¢
MUTANTS HAVE LITTLE INTELLIGENCE! APPEAR SELFISH...RUTHLESS... SADISTIC...EGOTISTICAL...
NAUSEATING!
MUTANTS' MAIN LIFE-DRIVE APPEARS TO BE REPRODUCTION! OTHER DRIVES ARE SUBSERVIENT TO THIS!
HOW PRIMITIVE!
MUTANTS APPEAR TO DESPISE AND MALTREAT LIFE-FORMS INFERIOR TO THEIR OWN! IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THEY WOULD, IF THEY COULD, KILL US!
THEY SHOULD BE DESTROYED! BEFORE THERE ARE TOO MANY OF THEM!
THE LOUDSPEAKER IN THE GLEAMING SKY GIANT DRONED ON...
WE HOPE YOU CAN UNDERSTAND, THEREFORE, WHY WE ARE LEAVING!
FRANKLY, NO! WE FORMED A MENTAL PICTURE OF THESE MONSTERS AS YOU WERE DESCRIBING THEM, BUT...
...WE DON'T SEE HOW YOUR ILLUSTRATION IN ANY WAY EXPLAINS WHY YOU NO LONGER DESIRE TO MAKE PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH US!
STAND BACK!
A BLAST OF SMOKE AND FLAME EXPLODED FROM THE ROCKET TUBES OF THE ALIEN CRAFT...SENDING THE FOUR WELCOMING SCIENTISTS SCURRYING TO SAFETY...
GOOD LORD!
CRAZY IDIOTS!
GOOD-BYE, EARTHLINGS!
5


ONE SCIENTIST CUPPED HIS HANDS TO HIS MOUTH... SHOUTING ABOVE THE ROAR OF THE ROCKETS...
I DON'T SEE WHAT THESE DISGUSTING MUTANT MONSTERS HAVE TO DO WITH US!
THE MUTANTS WE TOLD YOU ABOUT ACTUALLY WERE BORN!

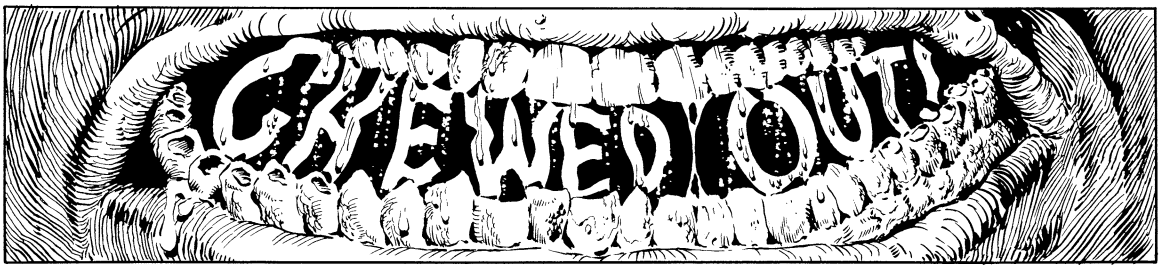

THE SHIP TREMBLED...
THEY WERE BORN TO MEMBERS OF OUR RACE... ON OUR PLANET!


SO WHAT?
SEE FOR YOURSELF! THAT CAPSULE CONTAINS TWO OF THEM!

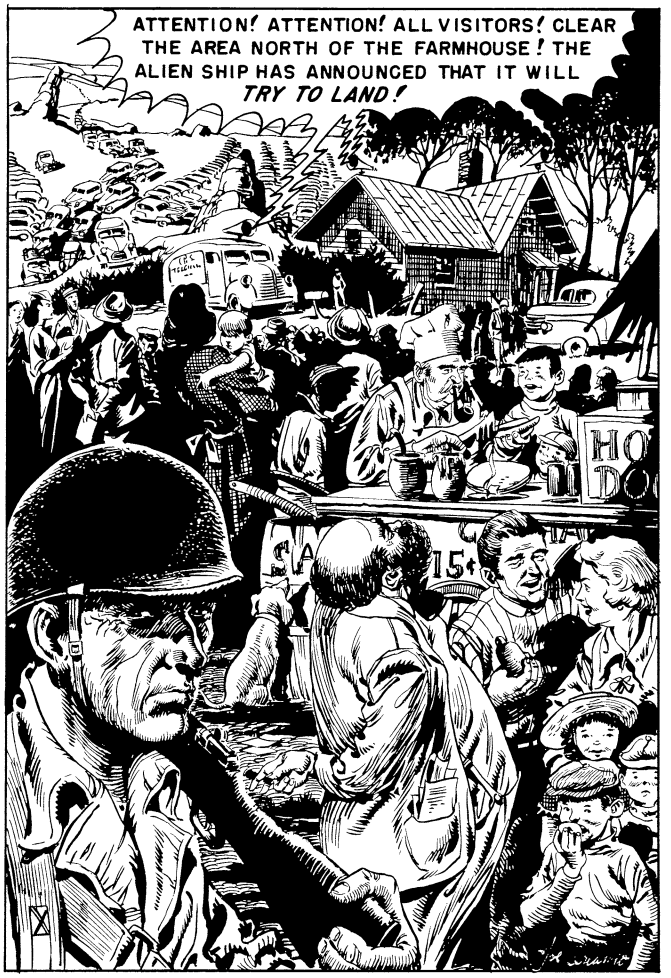

THE ROAR WAS DEAFENING! THE SHIP SHUDDERED...RISING INTO THE SKY ABOVE THE SANDS OF NEW MEXICO... SLOWLY! THEN... FASTER AND FASTER...
CAPSULE?
THAT METAL BALL THEY LOWERED!
THERE THEY GO!


THE SCIENTISTS WATCHED THE GRAY TRAIL OF ROCKET EXHAUST DISAPPEAR INTO THE BLUE...
NOT ME! I'M NOT GOING TO LOOK AT THE HIDEOUS THINGS! NOT UNARMED!
I'VE GOT A GUN! I HID IT UNDER MY SHIRT!
C'MON!

THE METAL BALL WAS MADE UP OF TWO HEMISPHERES! A TOUCH OF A BUTTON RELEASED THEM, AND THEY FELL APART...
GOOD LORD! A MAN... AND A WOMAN!
THE 'HORRIBLE MUTANTS' THEY DESCRIBED... THEY'RE HUMAN BEINGS!
THE END
6



FOR AS FAR AS THE EYE CAN SEE, CARS ARE JAMMED FENDER TO FENDER OVER THE FLAT ARKANSAS COUNTRYSIDE! THEY'VE COME FROM FAR AND NEAR, SOME OF THEM TRAVELING A THOUSAND MILES OR MORE... FROM EAST AND WEST... NORTH AND SOUTH... ALL CONVERGING ON THE TWENTY-ACRE COTTON FARM THAT HAD ONCE LAIN PEACEFULLY BENEATH THE WARM ARKANSAS SUN, THE PRIDE AND JOY OF A YOUNG FARMER NAMED HAROLD SETIKER! NOW, THE COTTON HAS BEEN TRAMPLED INTO THE SOIL... THE FARMHOUSE IS THE HEADQUARTERS OF GUFFAWING, POMPOUS GOVERNMENT MEN... AND SOLDIERS MARCH, BAYONETS FIXED, AROUND AND AROUND THE WEATHERBEATEN BUILDING, GUARDING IT! WHILE INSIDE, HAROLD SETIKER IS VIRTUALLY A PRISONER... FOR YOU SEE, HAROLD HAS MADE *CONTACT* WITH AN *ALIEN ROCKETSHIP!*


ATTENTION! ATTENTION! ALL VISITORS! CLEAR THE AREA NORTH OF THE FARMHOUSE! THE ALIEN SHIP HAS ANNOUNCED THAT IT WILL *TRY TO LAND!*

INSIDE THE FRAME FARMHOUSE, HAROLD SETIKER SITS AT A HOMEMADE HAM RADIO! HIS EYES ARE HEAVY FROM LACK OF SLEEP! IN HIS HAND, HE CLUTCHES A CHEAP MICROPHONE! BESIDE HIM STANDS AN ARMED SENTRY, HIS FACE A PLASTER MASK! BEHIND HAROLD, ARMY BRASS AND CHATTERING GOVERNMENT MEN PRESS CLOSE...

LISTEN, SETIKER! TELL 'EM WE GOT *BIG AIRFIELDS* NEAR WASHINGTON! TELL 'EM TO LAND *THERE!*
AH *TOL'* 'EM! THEY SAID *'NO!'* THEY WANT TO LAND *RIGHT HERE... ON MAH FARM!*

THE NEWS THAT THE ALIEN SHIP IS GOING TO LAND IS FLASHED ACROSS THE COUNTRY! MILLIONS OF PEOPLE ALL OVER THE UNITED STATES SIT GLUED TO THEIR RADIO RECEIVERS, WAITING FOR MORE NEWS FROM THE LITTLE ARKANSAS FARM! TELEVISION CAMERAS AT THIS VERY MOMENT ARE BEING RUSHED TO THE SCENE! INSIDE THE CLAPBOARD FARMHOUSE, HAROLD SITS BACK, CLICKS OFF HIS RECEIVER, REMOVES HIS HEADPHONES, AND BREATHES A HEAVY SIGH!

THEY'VE SIGNED OFF! AH TOLD 'EM WHAT YOU'RE GONNA *DO!* THEY SAID 'OKAY'!
GOOD! ALL RIGHT, LIEUTENANT! GET YOUR BLASTED ENGINEERS IN HERE!
YES, SIR!

THE GENERAL LIFTS A WARNING FINGER...
BUT, SO HELP ME, LIEUTENANT! IF YOU DISTURB THAT BLASTED FREQUENCY MODULATION THING-A-MA-BOB AND WE LOSE CONTACT...
DON'T WORRY, SIR! WE WON'T TOUCH THAT PART OF HIS SET!
WE'RE ONLY GOING TO TAP OFF THE AUDIO SIGNAL AND AMPLIFY IT THROUGH A P.A. SYSTEM SO EVERYONE HERE CAN LISTEN TO WHAT'S BEING SAID! THEN WE'RE GOING TO LENGTHEN THE MIKE CORD SO HAROLD CAN TALK TO THEM FROM OUTSIDE WHERE EVERYONE CAN SEE HIM!
WHAT? WHO'S BLASTED IDEA IS THAT?
THE PRESIDENT'S, SIR!
OH! H'RRUMPH! WELL, DON'T JUST STAND THERE! GET ON WITH IT!
BLASTED POLITICIANS!
YES, SIR!
MR. SETIKER! I WONDER IF YOU'LL BEGIN AT THE BEGINNING AND TELL US HOW ALL THIS CAME ABOUT!
AH'M AWFUL SLEEPY! I THAWT MEBEE AH COULD GIT A LITTLE SHUT-EYE...
LOOK HERE, SETIKER! DO YOU REALIZE WHO YOU ARE? WHY, EVERY MAN, WOMAN AND CHILD IN THIS COUNTRY IS WAITING BY THEIR RADIO AND T.V. SETS TO HEAR YOU AND SEE YOU... AND YOU WANT TO SLEEP? SHAME, MR. SETIKER! SHAME ON YOU!
BUT AH'M AWFUL TIRED! JUS' A LI'L WHILE...
START AT THE BEGINNING, MR. SETIKER.
GO AHEAD, MR. SETIKER! START TALKING! YOU'RE ON THE AIR!
HUH? OH! WAL! LET'S SEE, NOW! STARTED COUPLE DAYS AGO! AH ALWAYS WAS INTERESTED IN BEIN' A HAM RADIO OPERATOR AN' HAVIN' MAH OWN STATION...
'...SO AH SAVED UP FER THIS HERE KIT! SHE COME ABOUT TWO WEEKS AGO WITH ALL THEM DIRECTIONS FER ASSEMBLIN' IT! NOW, AH DON' READ TOO GOOD, BUT AH KIN FOLLOW NUMBERS AND LETTERS AN' STUFF... SO AH STARTED A WIRIN' THE DURN THING UP...'
LE'S SEE, NOW! ATTACH RESISTOR... 'R529'... TO LUG 'A' OF TUBE SOCKET '12' AND GROUND!
2

'WAL, FOLKS! 'BOUT THREE DAYS AGO, I FINISHED THE BLAMED THING AND PLUGGED 'ER IN! RIGHT AWAY, SHE BEGUN TO SMOKE!'

GUESS I MADE A *MISTAKE* SOMEWHERE!

'BUT THEY WARN'T NO ROOSHINS! I KEPT TAWKIN' TO 'EM, BUT THEY CLAMMED UP TIGHT...'

COME ON, FELLERS! THIS HERE'S A NEW SET I GOT! BE NICE AN' TAWK T' ME, HUH?

'THEN, OF A SUDDEN, I HEARED SOMETHIN'! A-BABBALIN' AND A-YAKIN'! RAHT AWAY, I STARTED A-DANCIN'! AH THAWT AH WUZ TUNED IN ON THEM THERE ROOSHINS OVER THERE IN MOSCOW...'

CROD-BUL-SIGOR-TIG-GUE! MAHN-PAW-SHAWN-TU...

HEY, YOU GUYS! THIS HERE'S *HAROLD SETIKER!* AH'M IN *ARKANSAS...U.S.A.!* HOW'S *JOE?*

'THEN, OF A SUDDEN, I HEARED 'EM AGIN! BUT THIS TIME, THEY WUZ A-TAWKIN' ENGLISH...'

HOWDY, HAROLD! HOW COME YOU TUNED IN THIS MODULATION, HUH?

SHUCKS, AH JUS' PLUGGED 'ER IN...THA'S ALL!

WAL, DON' TOUCH NUTHIN', SON! WE BEEN TRYIN' T' GIT IN TOUCH WITH YOU EARTHMEN FOR TWO YEARS NOW!

HUH? WHAT YOU TAWKIN' ABOUT, BOY?

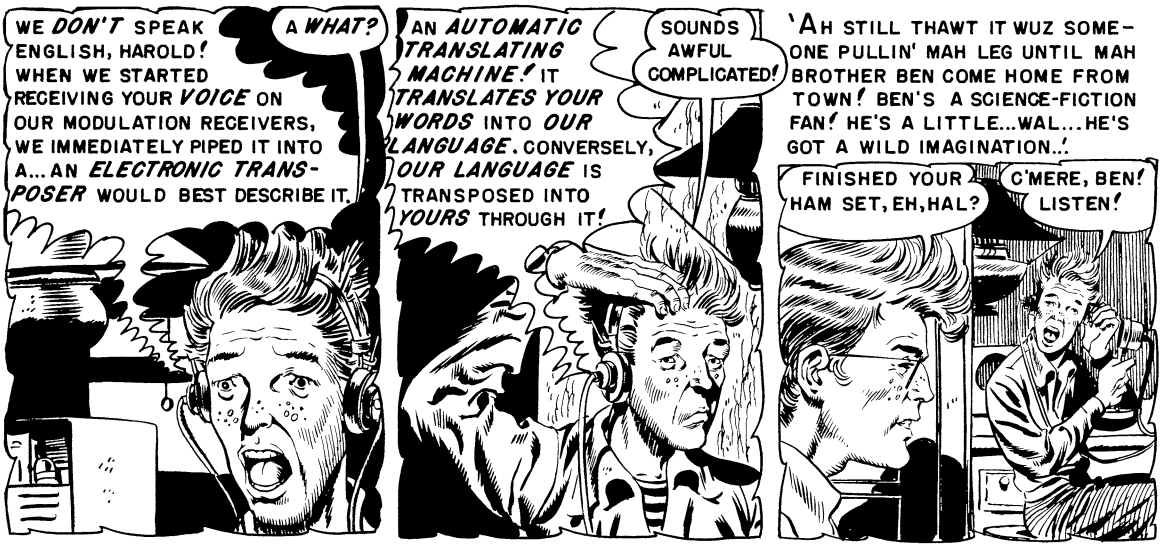
YOU'VE MADE CONTACT WITH A ROCKETSHIP, FELLER! RIGHT NOW, WE'RE ABOUT THREE DAYS' JOURNEY FROM YOUR PLANET!

STOP THE CORN HUSKIN', BUD! YOU CAIN'T MAKE ME SWALLOW THAT TALL YARN! C'MON, TELL THE TRUTH!

THIS *IS* THE TRUTH, HAROLD! WE'VE BEEN TRAVELING TWO YEARS... EARTH TIME...TOWARD YOU...AND HAVE BEEN TRYIN' TO MAKE CONTACT ALL THE WAY! YOU'RE THE FIRST HUMAN WE'VE BEEN ABLE TO REACH!

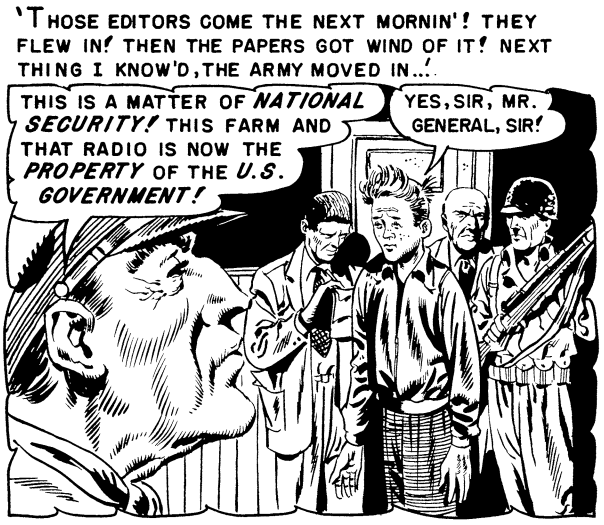
OH, YEAH? WAL, IF YOU *NEVER* SPOKE TO NO HUMAN *BEFORE,* HOW COME YOU KIN SPEAK *ENGLISH?*

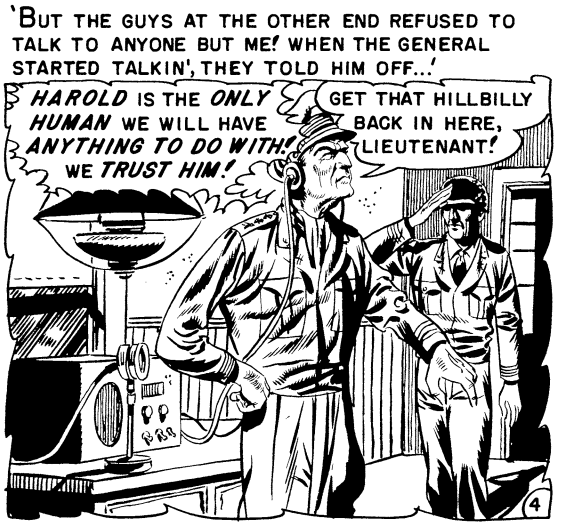
3


WE DON'T SPEAK ENGLISH, HAROLD! WHEN WE STARTED RECEIVING YOUR VOICE ON OUR MODULATION RECEIVERS, WE IMMEDIATELY PIPED IT INTO A... AN ELECTRONIC TRANSPOSER WOULD BEST DESCRIBE IT.
A WHAT?
AN AUTOMATIC TRANSLATING MACHINE! IT TRANSLATES YOUR WORDS INTO OUR LANGUAGE. CONVERSELY, OUR LANGUAGE IS TRANSPOSED INTO YOURS THROUGH IT!
SOUNDS AWFUL COMPLICATED!
'AH STILL THAWT IT WUZ SOMEONE PULLIN' MAH LEG UNTIL MAH BROTHER BEN COME HOME FROM TOWN! BEN'S A SCIENCE-FICTION FAN! HE'S A LITTLE...WAL...HE'S GOT A WILD IMAGINATION..!
FINISHED YOUR HAM SET, EH, HAL?
C'MERE, BEN! LISTEN!

'BEN LISTENED! HE MADE ME ASK THE GUYS ON THE OTHER END SOME REAL SCREWY QUESTIONS..!
MAH BROTHER WANTS TO KNOW WHAT METHOD OF...ER ...PROPULSHUN... IS USED BY YOUR SHIP?
WE TRAVEL ON MAGNETIC LINES OF FORCE EMANATING FROM YOUR PLANET!

'BEN WAS CONVINCED AFTER A HALF-HOUR SESSION! HE GRABBED THE PHONE AND CALLED NEW YAWK... SOME EDITORS OF A SCIENCE-FICTION COMIC MAGAZINE...
THIS HERE IS BEN SETIKER! AH LIVE NEAR BLYTHEVILLE, ARKANSAS! MAH BROTHER'S GOT AN ALIEN ROCKETSHIP ON HIS HAM RADIO!
WHAT? HEY, AL!
WHAT'S UP, BILL?

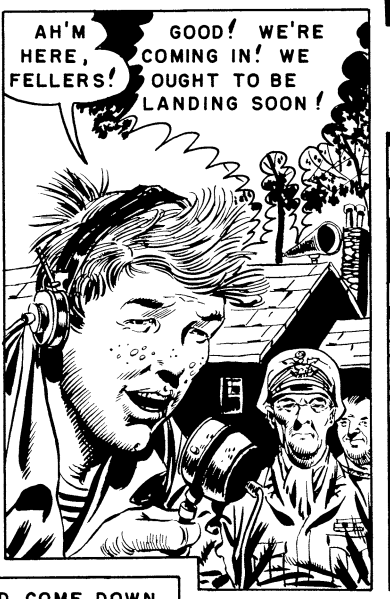

'THOSE EDITORS COME THE NEXT MORNIN'! THEY FLEW IN! THEN THE PAPERS GOT WIND OF IT! NEXT THING I KNOW'D, THE ARMY MOVED IN...!
THIS IS A MATTER OF NATIONAL SECURITY! THIS FARM AND THAT RADIO IS NOW THE PROPERTY OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT!
YES, SIR, MR. GENERAL, SIR!


'BUT THE GUYS AT THE OTHER END REFUSED TO TALK TO ANYONE BUT ME! WHEN THE GENERAL STARTED TALKIN', THEY TOLD HIM OFF...!
HAROLD IS THE ONLY HUMAN WE WILL HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH! WE TRUST HIM!
GET THAT HILLBILLY BACK IN HERE, LIEUTENANT!
4

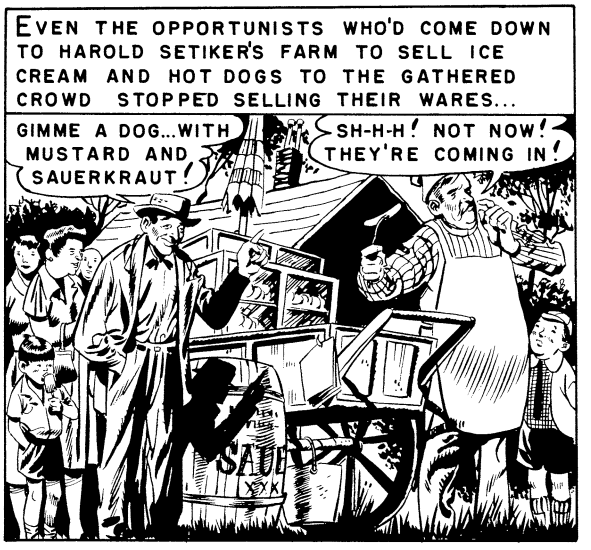
AN' THAS THE STORY, FOLKS! AH AIN'T HAD ANY SLEEP IN THREE DAYS! AH'M TIRED! AH...
THANK YOU...HAROLD SETIKER! LADIES AND GENTLEMEN! YOU HAVE JUST HEARD A BROADCAST DIRECT FROM THE ARKANSAS FARMHOUSE WHERE...
OKAY, SIR! WE'RE ALL SET UP!

LET'S GO, SETIKER! OUTSIDE!
YES, SIR!
...AND NOW HAROLD SETIKER IS GOING OUTSIDE, FOLKS! THEY'VE GOT HIS MICROPHONE OUT THERE! WE'LL SWITCH YOU TO...

OUTSIDE, A ROAR GOES UP FROM THE GATHERED THRONG AS HAROLD COMES THROUGH THE DOOR! THEN, SUDDENLY, THE LOUDSPEAKERS OF THE P.A. SYSTEM EXPLODE...
HAROLD...YOU THERE?
IT'S THEM! IT'S THE ALIEN SHIP!

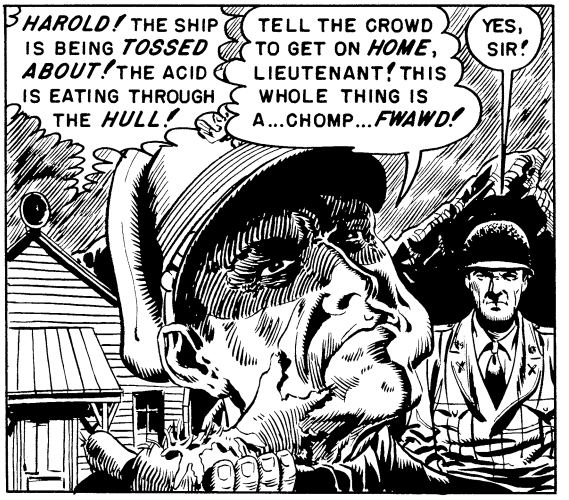

AH'M HERE, FELLERS!
GOOD! WE'RE COMING IN! WE OUGHT TO BE LANDING SOON!

ALL EYES ARE TURNED SKYWARD...STRAINING FOR THE FIRST SIGN OF THE ROCKETSHIP...
SETIKER! TELL 'EM WE DON'T SEE 'EM YET!
WE DON'T SEE YOU FELLERS! WHERE ARE YOU?


EVEN THE OPPORTUNISTS WHO'D COME DOWN TO HAROLD SETIKER'S FARM TO SELL ICE CREAM AND HOT DOGS TO THE GATHERED CROWD STOPPED SELLING THEIR WARES...
GIMME A DOG...WITH MUSTARD AND SAUERKRAUT!
SH-H-H! NOT NOW! THEY'RE COMING IN!

A HUSH FALLS OVER THE CROWD! A TREMENDOUS TRACT OF LAND NORTH OF THE FARMHOUSE HAS BEEN CLEARED TO MAKE ROOM FOR THE LANDING! THE WIDE-EYED ONLOOKERS LINE THE FENCES...
WE'RE COMIN' IN, HAROLD!
THEY'RE CRAZY, SETIKER! TELL 'EM WE DON'T SEE 'EM!
WE DON'T SEE YOU FELLERS YET!

THERE IS A CONFUSED BABBLE OVER THE LOUDSPEAKERS...
HAROLD! WE'VE LANDED! WE'VE LANDED IN A MURKY LAKE!
THEY'RE NUTS! THERE ISN'T A LAKE FOR MILES AROUND!
HUH?
HEY, FELLERS! YOU MUST BE OFF THE BEAM! THERE AIN'T NO LAKE...
IT'S FULL OF HORRIBLE MONSTERS, HAROLD! THEY'RE ATTACKIN' THE SHIP! TRYIN' TO ENGULF IT!
THE GENERAL GRABS HAROLD'S COLLAR...
WHAT'S THIS, SETIKER? SOME SORT OF GAG? S'HELP ME! IF YOU SCIENCE-FICTION GUYS ARE PULLING SOMETHING...
NO, GENERAL! HONEST...
HAROLD! THE LAKE IS ACID! IT'S EATING AWAY AT THE SHIP!
LIEUTENANT! GET ME A HOT DOG! SO HELP ME, SETIKER...
YES, SIR!
WE'VE REACHED THE BOTTOM OF THE LAKE...WE'RE SINKING INTO SOME STRANGE FOLIAGE!
...WITH MUSTARD AND SAUERKRAUT, LIEUTENANT!
YES, SIR!
HAROLD! SAVE US! WHERE ARE YOU? WHERE IS YOUR CIVILIZATION?
MAYBE THEY FELL INTO THE MISSISSIPI, GENERAL, SIR?
YEAH?
HERE'S YOUR HOT DOG, SIR!
THANKS! MAYBE YOU AND YOUR BUDDIES ARE GOING TO SPEND ABOUT THIRTY YEARS BEHIND BARS, TOO, SETIKER!
HONEST, GENERAL, SIR!
6


HAROLD! THE SHIP IS BEING TOSSED ABOUT! THE ACID IS EATING THROUGH THE HULL!
TELL THE CROWD TO GET ON HOME, LIEUTENANT! THIS WHOLE THING IS A...CHOMP...FWAWD!
YES, SIR!

HAROLD! THE SHIP IS BEING CRUSHED! HUGE WHITE MONSTERS ARE CLOSING IN ... CRUSHING THE SHIP!
CHOMP... TELL YOUR... CHOMP... BUDDIES TO CUT IT OUT... CHOMP... SETIKER! THIS HAS GONE FAR ENOUGH!

HAROLD! I'M THE ONLY ONE LEFT ALIVE! THE OTHERS HAVE BEEN CRUSHED TO DEATH! YAAAAAAAAAAH!
BUST THAT THING UP, LIEUTENANT! I... OUCH!
YES, SIR!

BLASTED HOT DOGS! NOTHING BUT JUNK! FEELS LIKE I BIT INTO A PEBBLE!
THEY'RE SMASHING HAROLD SETIKER'S RADIO, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN!

THE GENERAL FISHES AROUND IN HIS MOUTH AND FINALLY LOCATES THE HARD PIECE OF FRANKFURTER HE'D BITTEN INTO...

EXCEPT FOR THE TEETH MARKS MARRING ITS GLEAMING SURFACE, THE SHAPE OF THE THING THE GENERAL HAS REMOVED FROM HIS MOUTH IS QUITE DISCERNIBLE...

EDITORS' NOTE: SAUERKRAUT JUICE TEEMS WITH MICRO-ORGANISMS... WHICH, TO THE OCCUPANTS OF THE TINY ROCKETSHIP, *MUST* HAVE SEEMED LIKE MONSTERS! YOU SEE, THEY LANDED IN A BARREL OF THE STUFF BEHIND THE HOT-DOG STAND!

A MAN'S JOB!

COME IN! THERE'S STILL SOME TIME LEFT! I'LL TELL YOU WHY I'M HERE... HERE IN THIS HOSPITAL BED! IT MAY SEEM FANTASTIC TO YOU, BUT IT'S *TRUE*... EVERY WORD OF IT! I REMEMBER WHEN IT STARTED! I WAS A KID AT THE TIME... TWELVE YEARS OLD, TO BE EXACT! BUT I CAN SEE IT ALL... AS IF IT WERE YESTERDAY! IT WAS 1959! THE WORLD WAS IN A PRETTY MESSY CONDITION BACK THEN! THE DEPRESSION FOLLOWING THE '50-'55 WAR SCARE BOOM HAD SET IN, AND MILLIONS WERE OUT OF WORK... MY DAD, TOO! MOM WAS PRETTY SORE ABOUT IT ALL...

...BUT DAD JUST LAUGHED AT HER WHEN SHE ANNOUNCED THAT SHE WAS JOINING THE INDEPENDENT WOMEN VOTERS' PARTY...

...AND I'M GOING TO HELP CAMPAIGN FOR ADELAIDE RUTHERFORD! SHE'S RUNNING FOR *PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES!*

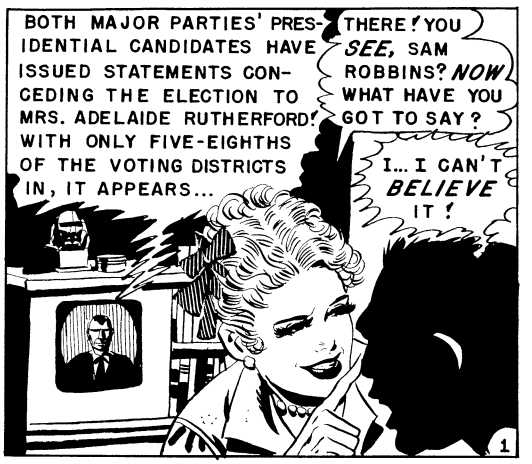
A *WOMAN PRESIDENT!* WHAT A *LAUGH!* HAW... HAW...

THE NEWSPAPERS AND RADIO FELT THE SAME WAY THAT DAD DID ABOUT A WOMAN RUNNING FOR PRESIDENT! THEY POOH-POOHED THE WHOLE IDEA AND PASSED IT OFF LIGHTLY! IT WAS A TREMENDOUS SHOCK TO THE MEN OF THE COUNTRY WHEN THE I.W.V.T.'S CANDIDATE WAS SWEPT INTO OFFICE BY A LANDSLIDE VOTE IN NOVEMBER 1960...

BOTH MAJOR PARTIES' PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES HAVE ISSUED STATEMENTS CONCEDING THE ELECTION TO MRS. ADELAIDE RUTHERFORD! WITH ONLY FIVE-EIGHTHS OF THE VOTING DISTRICTS IN, IT APPEARS...

THERE! YOU *SEE*, SAM ROBBINS? *NOW* WHAT HAVE YOU GOT TO SAY?

I... I CAN'T *BELIEVE* IT!



BUT WHETHER DAD BELIEVED IT OR NOT, IT WAS TRUE! THEN SOMEBODY GOT THE BRIGHT IDEA THAT A WOMAN PRESIDENT COULD BE DECLARED UNCONSTITUTIONAL...

WHY NOT? THE *SUPREME COURT IS* MADE UP OF *ALL MEN!* WHAT *THEY* SAY *GOES!* THEY COULD DECLARE IT *UNCONSTITUTIONAL!*

WE MEN HAVE GOT TO STICK TOGETHER!

BUT EVERYONE FORGOT ABOUT THE SUPREME COURT JUSTICES' *WIVES...*

HARVEY! I THINK IT'S TIME YOU *RETIRED* FROM THE BENCH! EITHER *THAT*... OR...

I... I THINK YOU'RE *RIGHT,* EMILY!

ONE BY ONE, THEY RESIGNED...PRESSURED BY THEIR WIVES! PRESIDENT RUTHERFORD APPOINTED PROMINENT WOMEN LAWYERS TO FILL THE VACANCIES! SOON, THE SUPREME COURT CONSISTED OF EIGHT WOMEN AND ONE MAN... A BACHELOR...

IT IS THE DECISION OF THIS COURT THAT THE ELECTION OF A *WOMAN* TO THE *OFFICE OF PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES* IS *CONSTITUTIONAL* AND CANNOT BE *QUESTIONED! EIGHT VOTES CONCURRING, ONE DISSENT!*

CONGRESS GOT BUSY TRYING TO DRAFT AN AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION TO PREVENT A RECURRENCE OF THIS SHATTERING EVENT! BUT BEFORE THE STATES COULD RATIFY IT, THE 1961 ELECTIONS WERE HELD...

SEVENTEEN STATES NOW HAVE A *MAJORITY OF WOMEN* IN THEIR LAWMAKING BODIES! THE AMENDMENT IS *DOOMED!*

WOMEN TOOK *THIRTY-TWO* SEATS OF *THIRTY-FOUR* IN THE *HOUSE! FOUR INCUMBENT SENATORS LOST TO WOMEN!*

BY 1966, ONLY *ONE MAN* REMAINED IN THE *HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES!* THE *SENATE* WAS *ALL WOMEN!* FINALLY...

YES, CONGRESSMAN MULBERRY! YOU MAY HAVE THE FLOOR!

AH SHOULD LAHK, AHT THIS TAHM, TO TENDAH MAH *RESIGNATION* DUE TO... AHEM... DUE TO...THAT IS... *WAL, AH RESIGN!*

AND SO THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES WAS COMPLETELY IN THE HANDS OF THE WOMEN OF THE COUNTRY! MEANWHILE, WOMEN HAD ALSO ENTERED WALL STREET AND INDUSTRY...

THAT'S *RIGHT,* MR. LAPONT! *MY SYNDICATE* NOW OWNS THE *CONTROLLING PERCENTAGE* OF YOUR VOTING STOCK. YOUR *WIFE'S* STOCK WAS ALL *WE NEEDED!*

RUINED! YOU'VE *STOLEN* MY COMPANY OUT FROM *UNDER ME!*

INDUSTRIES CONTROLLED BY WOMEN BEGAN TO HIRE WOMEN EMPLOYEES! MILLIONS OF MEN WERE LAID OFF..

ALL RIGHT! *GO* TO WORK! SEE IF *I* CARE! *I'LL* STAY HOME AND TAKE CARE OF THE HOUSE AND KIDS! THAT'S *OKAY WITH ME!*

NOW, YOU'RE TALKING *SENSE,* JOHN!

2

THE LABOR UNIONS' ROLLS BECAME VASTLY ONE-SIDED AS MORE AND MORE WOMEN LEFT THEIR HOMES TO TAKE JOBS! MEN WERE FORCED OUT! THE *BUSHY* EYEBROWED LABOR LEADER WAS REPLACED BY ONE WITH *PLUCKED* EYEBROWS...

MRS. FENBORD, WHO OPERATES THIS MINE, HAS *AGREED* TO OUR DEMANDS! A *POWDER ROOM* WILL BE *INSTALLED IN EVERY SHAFT!*

SOON, THE WORKING MALE WAS A RARITY! MOST MEN JUST TOOK OVER THE HOUSEHOLD CHORES WITHOUT A PEEP...

SH-H-H, JIMMY! I WANT TO HEAR THIS!

...AND NOW, BURTON SHAVE CREAM PRESENTS... "PA PERKENS", OR..."WHEN A BOY MARRIES"! YESTERDAY, YOU'LL REMEMBER, ROBERT WAS FACED WITH THE PROBLEM OF ELLEN'S GAMBLING AWAY HER SALARY! AS WE LOOK IN...

COOK BOOK

EGGS

WHILE WOMEN WORKED AS TAXI DRIVERS...

HE ALMOST *HIT* YOU!

AH, WHAT DO YOU *EXPECT* FROM A *MAN DRIVER?*

STOP

BUS STOP

...THE MEN STAYED HOME!

JUST *WAIT TILL YOUR MOTHER COMES HOME,* YOUNG MAN!

PLEASE, DADDY! I WON'T DO IT AGAIN...I PROMISE! DON'T TELL MOMMY! SHE'LL *SPANK* ME!

WHILE WOMEN TOOK OVER THE POLICE DEPARTMENTS AND THE FIRE DEPARTMENTS...

DON'T KICK, MISTER! YOU'RE ALL RIGHT NOW! I'VE GOT YOU!

...THE MEN STAYED HOME!

DID YOU HEAR ABOUT *MR. O'LEARY?* WELL, *HIS* WIFE... OH, SHE MAKES AN *AWFUL LOT OF MONEY*... WELL, *SHE* BOUGHT *HIM* THE *SWEETEST* FUR-COLLARED HOUSECOAT YOU *EVER* SAW!

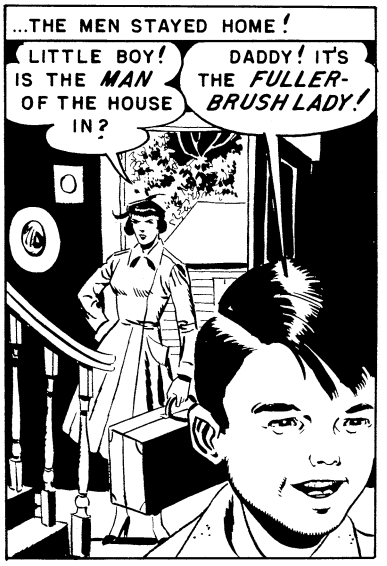
NO! *REALLY?* I WISH SARAH'D BUY *ME* THINGS LIKE THAT!

WHILE WOMEN WORKED LONG HARD HOURS...

THAT'S RIGHT, EDDIE! I'LL BE *LATE* GETTING HOME TONIGHT! GOT A LOT OF WORK TO CATCH UP ON...

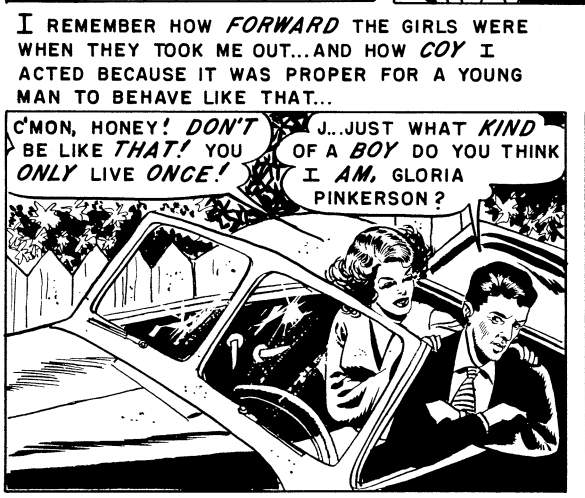
TEE-HEE...

3

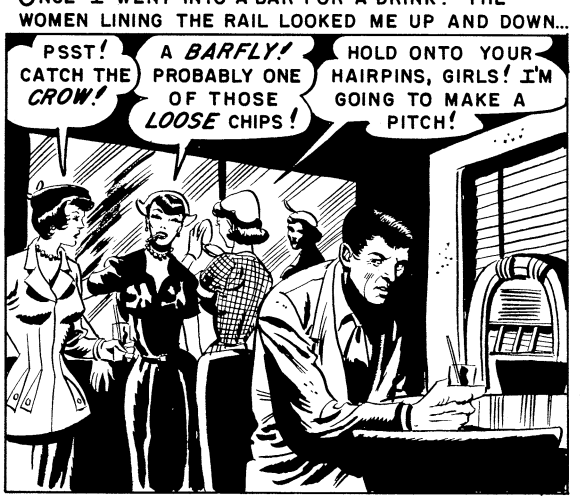

...THE MEN STAYED HOME!
LITTLE BOY! IS THE MAN OF THE HOUSE IN?
DADDY! IT'S THE FULLER-BRUSH LADY!

BY THE TIME I WAS NINETEEN, I COULD HARDLY REMEMBER 'THE MAN'S WORLD'...AS DAD SO WISTFULLY PUT IT...
NOW, ALL I DO IS WORK AND SLAVE OVER A HOT ELECTRIC STOVE, WHILE YOUR MOTHER SITS IN HER NICE COOL OFFICE...
OKAY, DAD! OKAY!

I REMEMBER WHAT IT WAS LIKE, PASSING THE CORNER WHERE THAT CROWD OF ROWDY 'DRUGSTORE COWGIRLS' HUNG OUT...
WOW! LOOK AT THE SHOULDERS ON THAT SLIM!
HEY, KIDDO! WHAT'CHA DOIN' T'NIGHT?
BURN SE CORA


I REMEMBER HOW FORWARD THE GIRLS WERE WHEN THEY TOOK ME OUT...AND HOW COY I ACTED BECAUSE IT WAS PROPER FOR A YOUNG MAN TO BEHAVE LIKE THAT...
C'MON, HONEY! DON'T BE LIKE THAT! YOU ONLY LIVE ONCE!
J...JUST WHAT KIND OF A BOY DO YOU THINK I AM, GLORIA PINKERSON?

SOME YOUNG BOYS I KNEW GOT THEMSELVES NICE FAT OLD "SUGAR MOMMIES"! THE OLD BAGS WOULD BUY THEM CLOTHES AND SET THEM UP IN APARTMENTS...
LIKE THIS PENTHOUSE, BABY?
IT'S OKAY, MOMMY! BUT YOU PROMISED YOU WOULD BUY ME A FUR COAT, TOO!


ONCE I WENT INTO A BAR FOR A DRINK! THE WOMEN LINING THE RAIL LOOKED ME UP AND DOWN...
PSST! CATCH THE CROW!
A BARFLY! PROBABLY ONE OF THOSE LOOSE CHIPS!
HOLD ONTO YOUR HAIRPINS, GIRLS! I'M GOING TO MAKE A PITCH!

WHEN A WOMAN PICKED A MAN UP, IT WAS ALWAYS THE SAME ROUTINE...
MY HUSBAND JUST DOESN'T UNDERSTAND ME!
OH, I'M SO SORRY!
4

BY THE TIME I WAS TWENTY-ONE, *EVERYTHING* HAD CHANGED! THE 1968 WORLD SERIES WAS PLAYED BY THE DETROIT *TIGRESSES* AND THE BOSTON *SQUAWS!* A GIRL I KNEW TOOK ME...

C'MON, MINNIE! BLAST ONE INTO THE STANDS!

BURN THE OLD PILL BY 'ER, RUTHY BABY!

SHE TOOK ME TO THE BOXING MATCHES, TOO...

ATTA GIRL, BATTLER!

YOU DID IT, HONEY!

GENTLEMEN AND LADIES! THE NEW HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION OF THE WORLD, ANNIE... BATTLER... BLOGGINS!

EVEN BURLESQUES HAD MADE THE CHANGEOVER...

THAT'S THE *CUTEST* BEVY OF *DREAMY MALES* I'VE SEEN ON *ANY CHORUS LINE!*

I... JUST COME FOR THE *COMEDIENNES!*

POSTERS BLARED AT ME FROM WALLS...

JOIN THE MACS

MEN'S ARMY CORPS

RELEASE A WOMAN FOR ACTIVE DUTY

SHELTER

FINALLY... IT HAPPENED! I FELL IN *LOVE!* AND WHEN I WAS PROPOSED TO, MY JOY KNEW NO BOUNDS...

OH *YES... YES!* I'LL MARRY YOU, SALLY!

IT'LL BE *HARD* AT FIRST! I'M NOT *MAKING* MUCH! BUT *WE'LL* GET ALONG!

BUT WHEN SALLY ASKED MOTHER'S PERMISSION, SHE WOULDN'T GIVE IT! MOTHER FELT SALLY WASN'T *GOOD ENOUGH* FOR ME! SO WE *ELOPED!* SALLY CAME TO MY WINDOW WITH A LADDER...

CAREFUL, HONEY! *CAREFUL!*

SHHHH! DON'T MAKE ANY *NOISE!* MOTHER WILL *HEAR* US!

AND SO SALLY AND I WERE MARRIED BY A JUSTICE OF THE PEACE...

I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU WOMAN AND HUSBAND! AHEM...

...AND NOW I THINK I'LL EXERCISE MY PRIVILEGE... AND KISS THE GROOM!

5

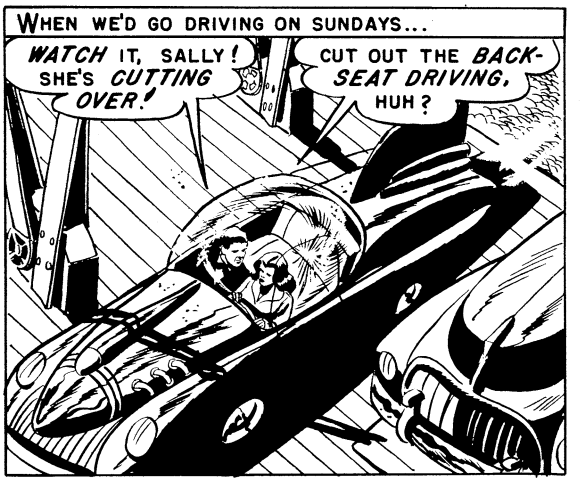
SALLY AND I SETTLED DOWN IN A LITTLE APARTMENT... AND I BECAME THE BUSY HOMEMAKER...

ONE NIGHT, SALLY STAYED OUT LATE PLAYING MAH-JONG WITH THE GIRLS! I WAITED UP FOR HER! SHE TIPTOED INTO THE BEDROOM WITH HER SHOES OFF...

WE WERE JUST LIKE ANY ORDINARY MARRIED COUPLE! SALLY'D COMPLAIN ABOUT THE MONEY I SPENT ON CLOTHES...

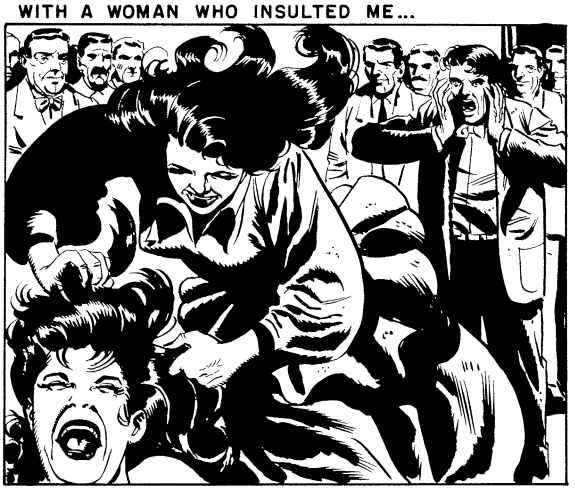
YOU MEN ARE *NUTS!* ONE YEAR CUFFS ARE ABOVE THE ANKLES... NEXT YEAR *DOWN* AGAIN...
BUT, DEAR! YOU WOULDN'T WANT ME TO BE *OUT OF FASHION,* WOULD YOU?

WHEN WE'D GO DRIVING ON SUNDAYS...



ONCE A POLICEWOMAN STOPPED ME FOR SPEEDING, BUT I MANAGED TO TALK MY WAY OUT OF A TICKET! I GAVE HER THAT INNOCENT, COY LOOK WITH THE FLUTTERING EYELASHES...

ANOTHER TIME SALLY HAD A TERRIBLE FIGHT WITH A WOMAN WHO INSULTED ME...



I WAS SO PROUD OF HER...

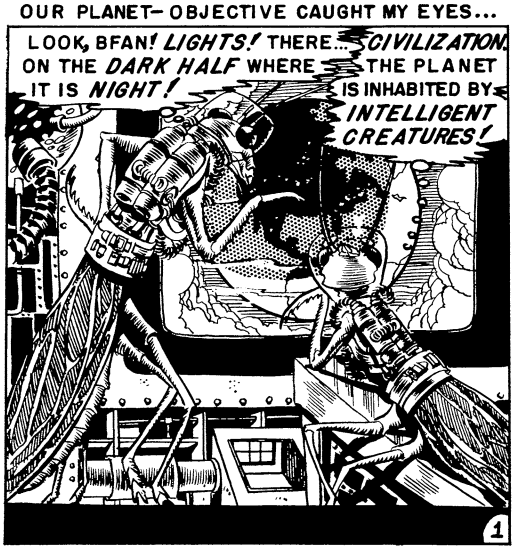
OF COURSE, SALLY AND I HAD OUR LITTLE SPATS, TOO! LIKE THE TIME I PLAYED POKER WITH THE OTHER BOYS IN THE APARTMENT HOUSE ONE AFTERNOON...
WHAT? SUPPER ISN'T READY? OH! PLAYING CARDS AGAIN?
I...I DIDN'T NOTICE HOW LATE IT HAD GOTTEN, DEAR!
...AND THE TIME DAD DROPPED IN ON US FOR A WEEK-END AND STAYED TWO MONTHS...
SOB... SOB! THAT'S MY FATHER YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT, SALLY!
I DON'T CARE! EITHER HE GOES TOMORROW, OR I GO!
...OR THE TIME SALLY BROUGHT HER BOSS HOME FOR SUPPER ONE EVENING WITHOUT EVEN WARNING ME...
SH-H-H-H, BABY! SHE'LL HEAR YOU! I...I'M SORRY, HON! JUST WHIP SOMETHING UP! ANYTHING!
I...I HATE YOU, SALLY ROBBINS! THERE ISN'T A THING IN THE HOUSE... AND I WANTED TO MAKE AN IMPRESSION!
...OR THE SPATS WE'D HAVE WHEN I'D COMPLAIN...
YOU NEVER TAKE ME OUT! ALL YOU DO IS COME HOME... KICK OFF YOUR PUMPS... AND PLOP DOWN ON THE SOFA! I'M BORED! I WANT TO GO SOMEWHERE!
AW, CUT IT OUT, BABY! I'M TIRED. I HAD A HARD DAY AT THE OFFICE!
WHAT'S THAT YOU'RE SAYING? IT'S A FANTASTIC STORY? YOU DON'T BELIEVE THE WOMEN COULD TAKE OVER THE MEN'S JOBS... AND MEN TAKE OVER THE WOMEN'S? WHY DO YOU THINK I'M IN THIS HOSPITAL? I'M NOT GOING TO BE BORED ANY MORE IN THE EVENINGS IF SALLY DOESN'T TAKE ME OUT!
ALL RIGHT, NURSE! WHEEL HIM IN!
YES, DOCTOR!
YOU SEE, I'M GOING TO HAVE A BABY!
PATERNI
THE END...
7

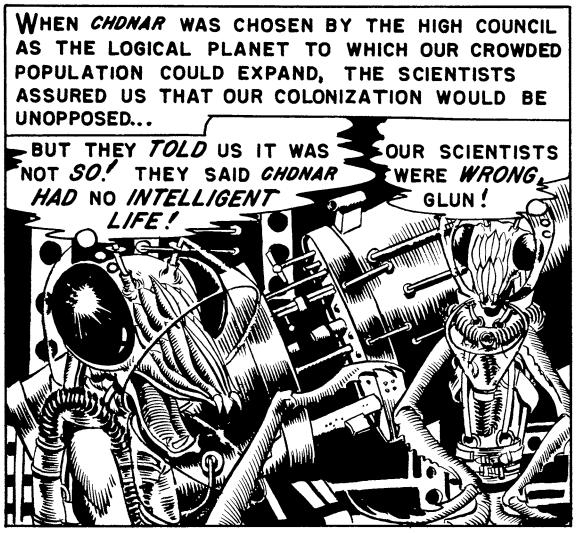
*EDITORS' NOTE:
THE ORGINAL DOCUMENT FROM WHICH THIS STORY HAS BEEN ADAPTED WAS DISCOVERED IN THE YEAR 2907... MIDWAY DURING THE PERIOD OF INTERSTELLAR EXPANSION... 2710-3100A.D. IT APPEARED TO BE THE RECORD OF A PRE-INVASION REPORT FROM AN ALIEN SPACE EXPLORER TO HIS GOVERNMENT! NATURALLY, THE TRANSLATION IS APPROXIMATE!

*GLUN'S ANTENNAE TWITCHED NERVOUSLY AS HIS EXCLAMATION EXPLODED IN MY BRAIN! (*NO DOUBT THESE CREATURES COMMUNICATED BY MENTAL TELEPATHY!—ED.*) HE WAVED HIS COXAE TOWARD THE GLOWING ASTRO-VIEW-SCREEN...

SEE, BFAN! OUR DESTINATION APPEARS ON THE VIEWER! CHDNAR (EARTH!-ED.) IS EXACTLY AS OUR SCIENTISTS DESCRIBED IT!
YES, GLUN! IT IS A GREEN PLANET...LIKE OUR OWN! NOTICE THE LAND AND SEA FORMATIONS!

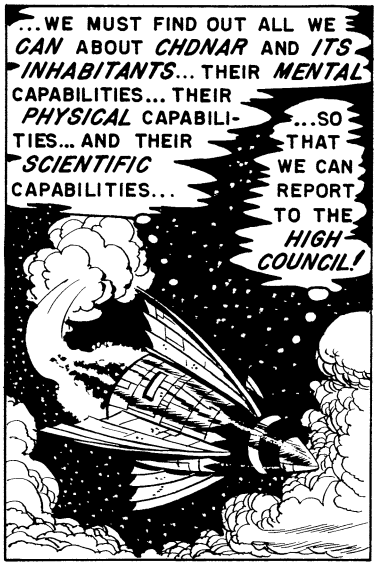
CHDNAR (THEIR NAME FOR EARTH!-ED.) LOOMED LARGER AND LARGER ON OUR ASTRO-SCREEN AS WE NEARED IT! SUDDENLY, TINY WHITE TWINKLING SPECKS IN THE DARK HALF OF OUR PLANET— OBJECTIVE CAUGHT MY EYES...


LOOK, BFAN! LIGHTS! THERE ON THE DARK HALF WHERE IT IS NIGHT!
CIVILIZATION... THE PLANET IS INHABITED BY INTELLIGENT CREATURES!
1

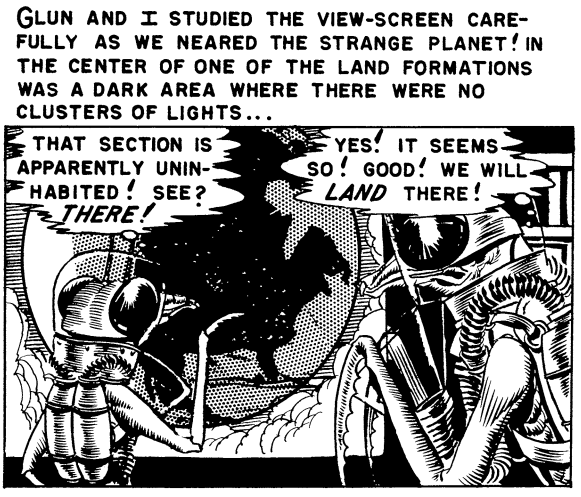

WHEN CHDNAR WAS CHOSEN BY THE HIGH COUNCIL AS THE LOGICAL PLANET TO WHICH OUR CROWDED POPULATION COULD EXPAND, THE SCIENTISTS ASSURED US THAT OUR COLONIZATION WOULD BE UNOPPOSED...
BUT THEY TOLD US IT WAS NOT SO! THEY SAID CHDNAR HAD NO INTELLIGENT LIFE!
OUR SCIENTISTS WERE WRONG, GLUN!

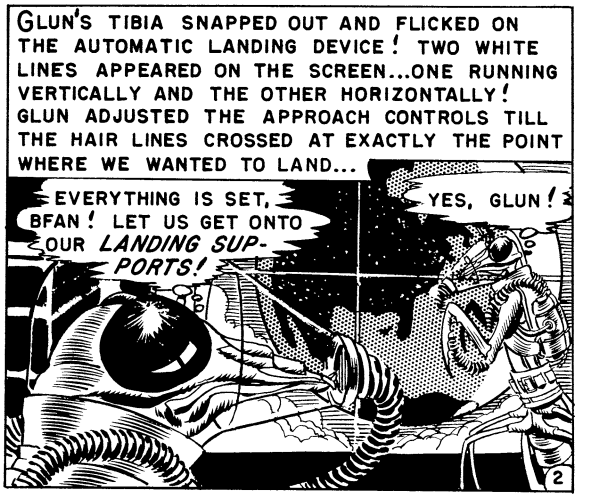
THE TWINKLING LIGHTS GREW LARGER AND LARGER ON OUR VIEW-SCREEN, AND SOON WE COULD DISCERN THAT EACH TWINKLING GLOW WAS A DENSE CLUSTER OF TINY LIGHTS...
CITIES! EACH ONE OF THOSE CLUSTERS OF TINY LIGHTS IS A CITY! THE CREATURES THAT INHABIT CHDNAR ARE SOCIAL-COMMUNAL!
I... I WONDER WHAT THEY LOOK LIKE! PERHAPS THEY WILL BE UGLY...NOT LIKE YOU AND I!

PERHAPS, BFAN! BUT IN ANY CASE, WE MUST ABANDON OUR ORIGINAL LANDING PLANS AND FIND AN AREA THAT SEEMS UNINHABITED!
IT WOULD BE BETTER TO PROCEED CAUTIOUSLY FROM HERE ON!
YOU ARE RIGHT, GLUN! SIMPLE COLONIZATION OF CHDNAR IS IMPOSSIBLE NOW! INSTEAD...

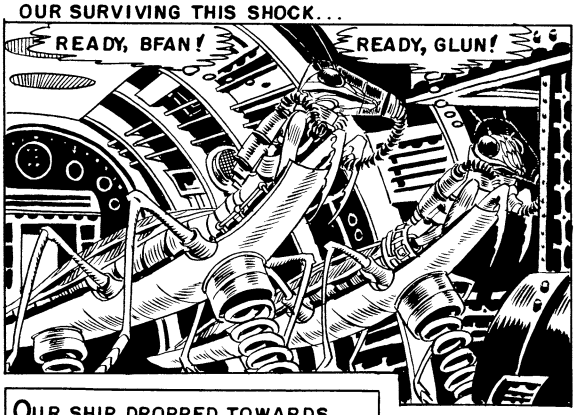

...WE MUST FIND OUT ALL WE CAN ABOUT CHDNAR AND ITS INHABITANTS... THEIR MENTAL CAPABILITIES... THEIR PHYSICAL CAPABILITIES... AND THEIR SCIENTIFIC CAPABILITIES...
...SO THAT WE CAN REPORT TO THE HIGH COUNCIL!

EXACTLY! THE HIGH COUNCIL WILL THEN FORMULATE INVASION PLANS! IF CHDNAR IS TO BE COLONIZED...
...WE WILL FIRST HAVE TO CONQUER IT!

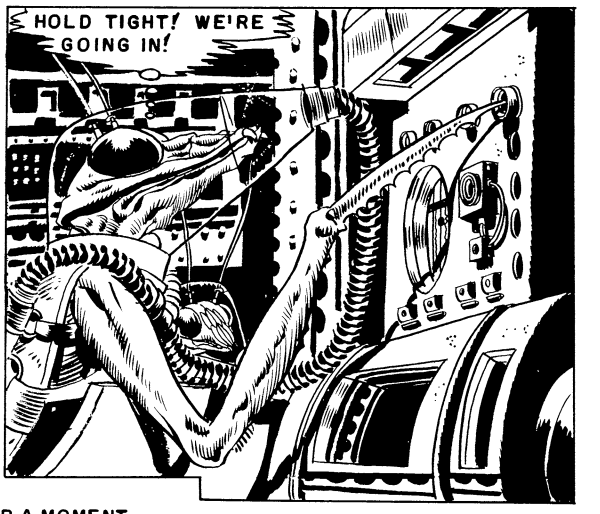

GLUN AND I STUDIED THE VIEW-SCREEN CAREFULLY AS WE NEARED THE STRANGE PLANET! IN THE CENTER OF ONE OF THE LAND FORMATIONS WAS A DARK AREA WHERE THERE WERE NO CLUSTERS OF LIGHTS...
THAT SECTION IS APPARENTLY UNINHABITED! SEE? THERE!
YES! IT SEEMS SO! GOOD! WE WILL LAND THERE!


GLUN'S TIBIA SNAPPED OUT AND FLICKED ON THE AUTOMATIC LANDING DEVICE! TWO WHITE LINES APPEARED ON THE SCREEN...ONE RUNNING VERTICALLY AND THE OTHER HORIZONTALLY! GLUN ADJUSTED THE APPROACH CONTROLS TILL THE HAIR LINES CROSSED AT EXACTLY THE POINT WHERE WE WANTED TO LAND...
EVERYTHING IS SET, BFAN! LET US GET ONTO OUR LANDING SUPPORTS!
YES, GLUN!
2

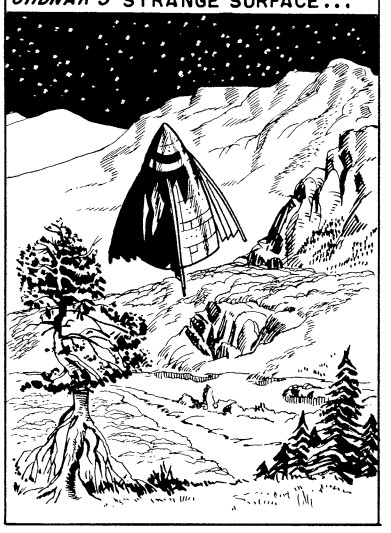
A LANDING SUPPORT IS A PIECE OF APPARATUS WHICH ABSORBS MOST OF THE SHOCK OF LANDING! AS YOU KNOW, OUR PROTHORAX (*THE MIDDLE, ELONGATED SECTION OF THE CREATURE'S BODY!-ED.*) IS SO BRITTLE THAT DAMAGE TO IT RESULTS IN DEATH! THE LANDING SUPPORT IS ESSENTIAL TO OUR SURVIVING THIS SHOCK...



GLUN PRESSED THE LANDING BUTTON! THE AUTOMATIC LANDING DEVICE TOOK OVER! THE SHIP LURCHED AS THE APPROACH COURSE WAS SET...



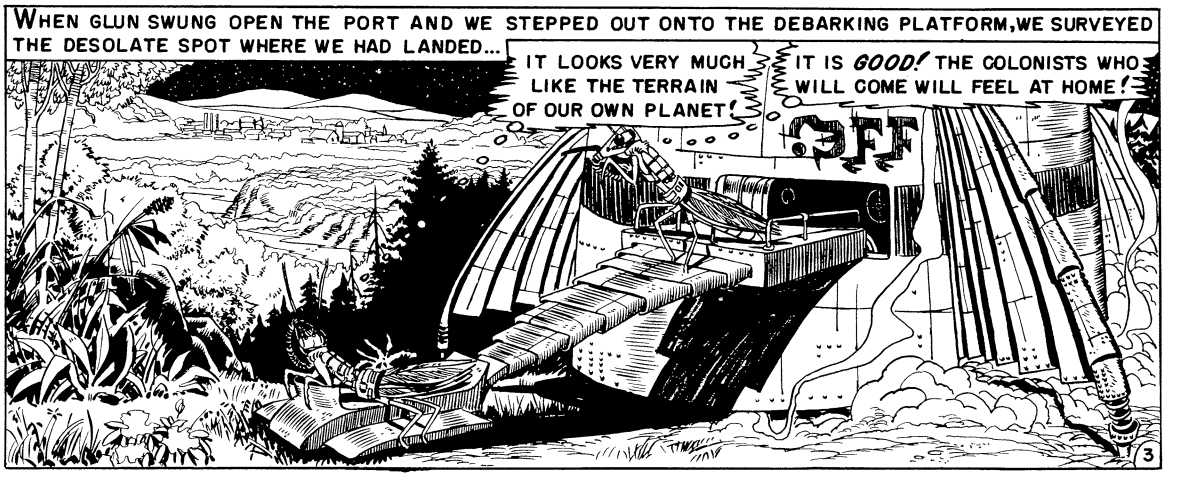
OUR SHIP DROPPED TOWARDS *CHONAR'S* STRANGE SURFACE...



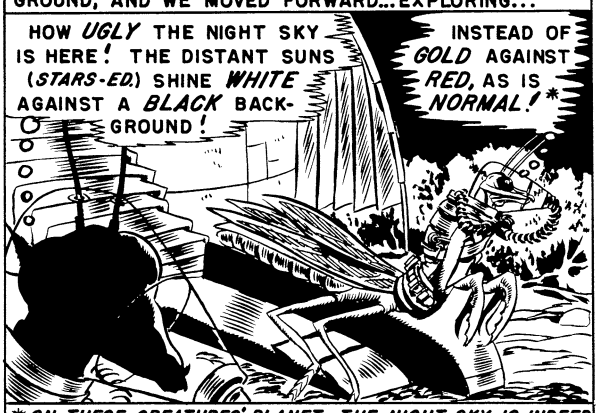
IT HESITATED FOR A MOMENT... HOVERING ABOVE IT, ROCKETS (*ROUGHLY TRANSLATED!-ED.*) BLASTING...

...THEN SETTLED SLOWLY TO REST...

WHEN GLUN SWUNG OPEN THE PORT AND WE STEPPED OUT ONTO THE DEBARKING PLATFORM, WE SURVEYED THE DESOLATE SPOT WHERE WE HAD LANDED...



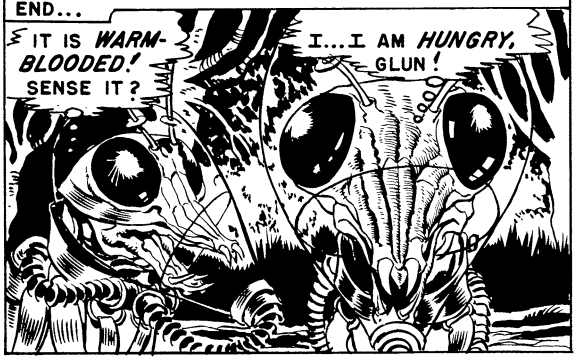
THE DEBARKING PLATFORM SLID NOISELESSLY TO THE GROUND, AND WE MOVED FORWARD...EXPLORING...


HOW *UGLY* THE NIGHT SKY IS HERE! THE DISTANT SUNS (*STARS-ED.*) SHINE *WHITE* AGAINST A *BLACK* BACKGROUND!
INSTEAD OF *GOLD* AGAINST *RED*, AS IS *NORMAL!**

**ON THESE CREATURES' PLANET, THE NIGHT SKY IS INDEED A DEEP RED! IT IS CAUSED BY A FREAK REFRACTION OF LIGHT THROUGH ITS ATMOSPHERE! -ED.*

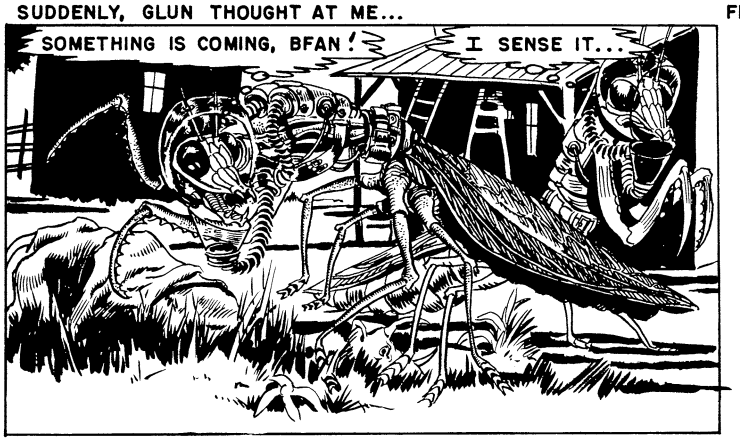
GLUN STOPPED SHORT...HIS ANTENNAE WAVING...

THE CREATURE WAS BROWN...COVERED WITH SILKEN HAIRS! IT WAS OF A FOUR-LEGGED VARIETY, LACKING ANTENNAE OR VESTIGIAL WINGS! ITS LIMBS WERE SHORT AND STRAIGHT, ENDING IN CLOVEN BONE-LIKE FOOT PADS! A HAIRY APPENDAGE SWISHED AT ITS POSTERIOR END...



THE PREDIGESTION FLUIDS FLOWED FROM THE SPINES ON MY FEMUR IN ANTICIPATION AS WE STALKED THE UNSUSPECTING CREATURE! SUDDENLY, IT LIFTED ITS HEAD STRUCTURE AND TURNED TOWARDS US! ITS BEADY EYES BULGED AS IT CAUGHT SIGHT OF US! I DARTED FORWARD, AND IT UNLEASHED A HORRIFIED SNORT...

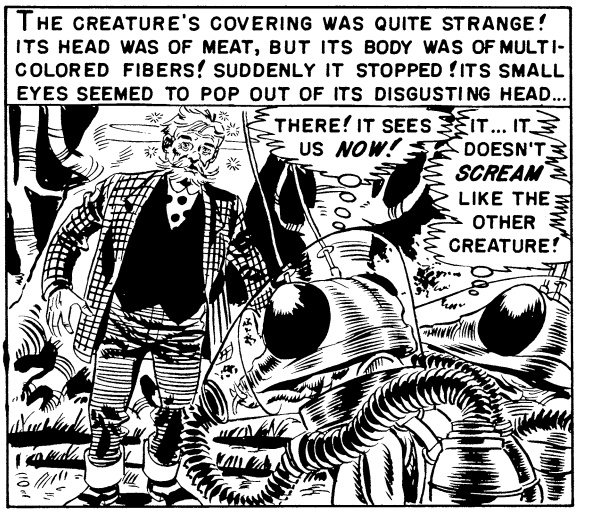
I CLASPED THE CREATURE'S NECK BETWEEN MY FEMUR AND MY TIBIA AND SEVERED ITS HEAD FROM ITS BODY! GLUN AND I FEASTED! THE MEAT OF THE CREATURE WAS HOT AND TASTY...NOT UNLIKE THE *MFORBDS* OF OUR OWN PLANET! SUDDENLY, GLUN THOUGHT AT ME...



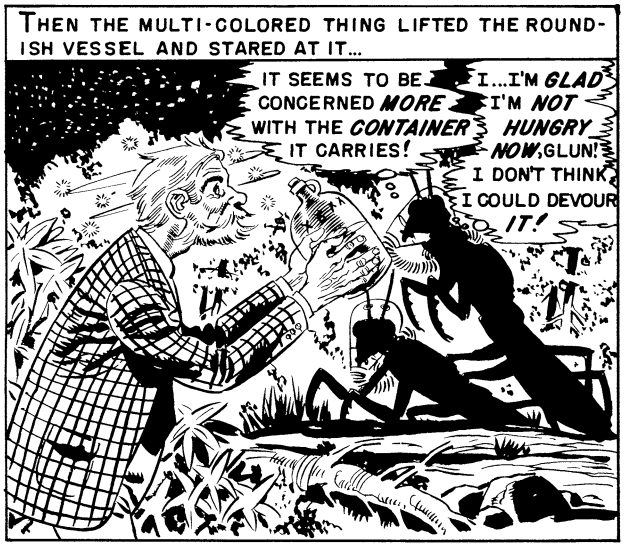
A SMALL UPRIGHT CREATURE...OF A FOUR-LIMBED VARIETY, BUT USING ONLY TWO OF ITS FOUR LIMBS FOR LOCOMOTION...MOVED ACROSS THE FIELD WITH A STAGGERING GAIT...

4

AT THE END OF ONE OF THE CREATURE'S TWO UPPER LIMBS SWUNG A ROUNDISH CONTAINER! AN ODOR OF *FERMENTATION* ISSUED FORTH FROM ITS COVERED OPENING...
IT HAS NOT AS YET SEEN US!
HOW *UGLY* IT IS!


THE CREATURE'S COVERING WAS QUITE STRANGE! ITS HEAD WAS OF MEAT, BUT ITS BODY WAS OF MULTI-COLORED FIBERS! SUDDENLY IT STOPPED! ITS SMALL EYES SEEMED TO POP OUT OF ITS DISGUSTING HEAD...
THERE! IT SEES US *NOW!*
IT... IT DOESN'T *SCREAM* LIKE THE OTHER CREATURE!

THE UPRIGHT CREATURE MOVED ITS HEAD FROM SIDE TO SIDE...
IT SHAKES ITS HEAD IN A *NEGATIVE ATTITUDE!*
PERHAPS IT DOES NOT *REALIZE*...


THEN THE MULTI-COLORED THING LIFTED THE ROUNDISH VESSEL AND STARED AT IT...
IT SEEMS TO BE CONCERNED *MORE* WITH THE *CONTAINER* IT CARRIES!
I...I'M *GLAD* I'M *NOT HUNGRY NOW*, GLUN! I DON'T THINK I COULD DEVOUR *IT!*

THE ERECT CREATURE FLUNG THE ROUND RECEPTACLE FROM ITSELF...MUMBLING GUTTERAL PHRASES...
IT IS *ANGRY!*
STRANGE! IT SHOULD BE *FRIGHTENED* OF US!

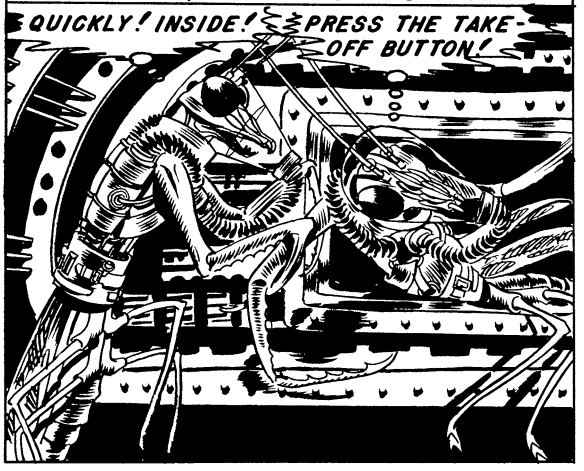
THEN A PECULIAR THING HAPPENED! FROM *BENEATH* THE CREATURE'S OUTER MULTI-COLORED SHELL, IT WITHDREW A WHITE ELONGATED OBJECT...
IT *THROWS* IT AT US!
PERHAPS IT WANTS US TO *EXAMINE* IT!
5

THE UPRIGHT CREATURE TURNED, EJECTED A DROPLET FROM ITS ORAL CAVITY UPON THE GROUND, AND STRODE OFF...UNSTEADILY...

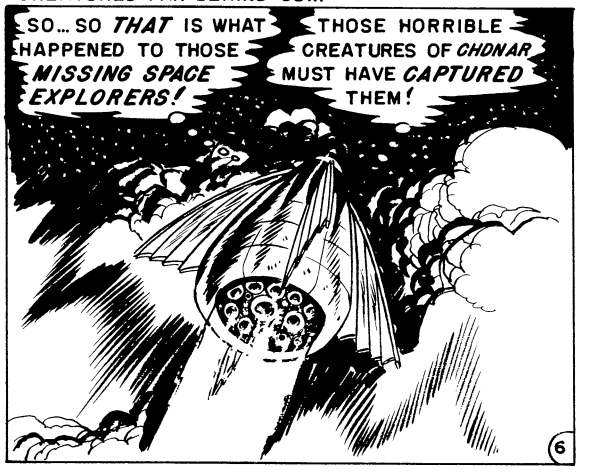
GLUN STOOPED SO THAT HE CAUGHT THE WHITISH THING IN HIS TIBIAS...

ROUGH TRANSLATION...'GOOD LORD'!*-ED.

STARK TERROR SWEPT OVER ME...FROM THE TIPS OF MY ANTENNAE TO THE BASE OF MY ABDOMEN SACK... AS WE HALF-RAN, HALF-FLEW TO THE SHIP...



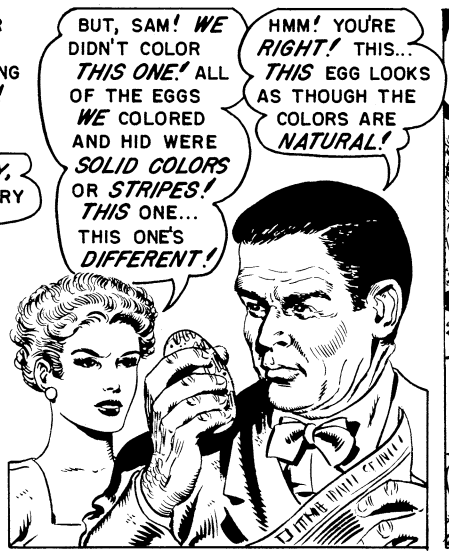
OUR SHIP ROSE SLOWLY... THEN FASTER AND FASTER UNTIL WE HAD LEFT *CHONAR* AND THOSE FEARFUL CREATURES FAR BEHIND US...


SO...SO *THAT* IS WHAT HAPPENED TO THOSE *MISSING SPACE EXPLORERS!*
THOSE HORRIBLE CREATURES OF *CHONAR* MUST HAVE *CAPTURED* THEM!
6

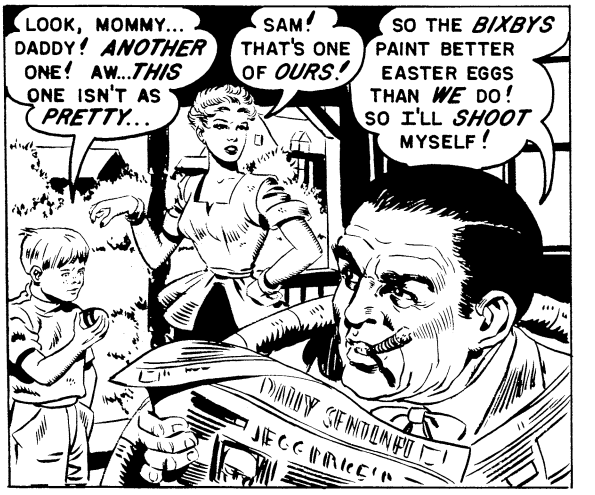
AND SO, MEMBERS OF THE HIGH COUNCIL, IT IS OUR ADVICE THAT SINCE CHDNAR IS POPULATED WITH SUCH GIGANTIC AND RUTHLESS CREATURES, WE SHOULD NOT ATTEMPT TO WAR WITH THEM!
BUT WHAT OF THE SMALL ONE WHO GAVE YOU THIS DOCUMENT?
WITHOUT DOUBT A YOUNG ONE! HE WILL EVENTUALLY GROW TO THAT SIZE!
I WONDER WHAT THESE MARKINGS BESIDE THE PICTURE MEAN?
OBVIOUSLY SOME TYPE OF WRITTEN MESSAGE! BUT WHY WONDER? THE PICTURE IS ENOUGH!
IT IS THE HIGH COUNCIL'S DECISION THAT WE WILL ABANDON PLANS TO COLONIZE CHDNAR!
SUCH AN ATTEMPT WOULD BE FOLLY IN THE FACE OF THIS EVIDENCE!
AND LET US HOPE THAT THE CHDNARIANS NEVER INVADE US, MY FRIENDS!
FON*! WHAT A CATASTROPHE THAT WOULD BE!
*ROUGH TRANSLATION... 'LORD!' ED.
EDITORS' NOTE: ALONG WITH THE ORIGINAL REPORT FROM WHICH WE MADE OUR TRANSLATION WAS THE YELLOWED BUT STILL READABLE DOCUMENT THAT BFAN AND GLUN BROUGHT BACK FROM EARTH! HERE IS A COPY OF IT!
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE BULLETIN NO. 75176 J 1952
THIS IS A PICTURE OF JED BUMPKIN! HE'S PRETTY PROUD OF HIS COLLECTION OF PRAYING MANTISES!
BUT BECAUSE OF JED...
17,598 BEETLE GRUBS...
101,429 MOSQUITOES...
95,465 FLIES...
465,250 ASSORTED OTHER PESTS...
...WILL NOT BE DESTROYED THIS YEAR! THESE SEVEN PRAYING MANTISES WOULD HAVE DEVOURED THEM IF THEY HAD BEEN ALLOWED TO LIVE! DON'T BE LIKE JED!
THE PRAYING MANTIS IS YOUR FRIEND!
THE END

DON'T COUNT YOUR CHICKENS...
JOE ORLANDO
THE BOY'S EXCLAMATION OF DELIGHT ECHOES THROUGH THE SUNNY EASTER SUNDAY AIR...
I FOUND ONE, MOMMY... DADDY! I FOUND ONE! GOLLY! IT'S A PRETTY ONE!
BRING IT HERE, TEDDY! I'LL HOLD IT WHILE YOU LOOK FOR MORE!
THE BOY SKIPS ACROSS THE LAWN TO THE PORCH WHERE HIS MOTHER AND FATHER SIT! IN HIS HAND HE CARRIES A GAILY COLORED OVAL FORM...
HERE! ISN'T IT A BEAUTY?
WHY...WHY, YES, TEDDY! IT'S... IT'S... LOVELY!
1

THE BOY DEPOSITS THE EASTER EGG IN HIS MOTHER'S LAP AND ROMPS OFF TOWARD THE BUDDING SHRUBS TO SEARCH FOR MORE! THE MOTHER TURNS TO THE FATHER...

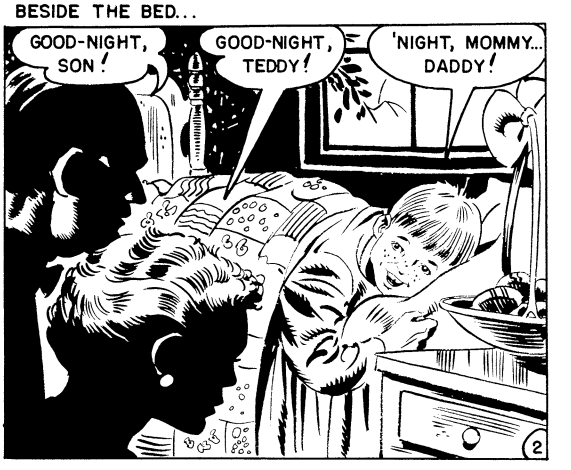

BUT, SAM! WE DIDN'T COLOR THIS ONE! ALL OF THE EGGS WE COLORED AND HID WERE SOLID COLORS OR STRIPES! THIS ONE... THIS ONE'S DIFFERENT!
HMM! YOU'RE RIGHT! THIS... THIS EGG LOOKS AS THOUGH THE COLORS ARE NATURAL!

SAM! WE'VE GOT TO GIVE IT BACK!
HOW, MARTHA? TEDDY KNOWS HE FOUND IT! YOU CAN'T TELL HIM IT DOESN'T BELONG TO HIM! AFTER ALL... HE STILL THINKS THE EASTER BUNNY HIDES THEM! YOU'LL DESTROY HIS ILLUSION! BETTER FORGET ABOUT IT!


LOOK, MOMMY... DADDY! ANOTHER ONE! AW... THIS ONE ISN'T AS PRETTY...
SAM! THAT'S ONE OF OURS!
SO THE BIXBYS PAINT BETTER EASTER EGGS THAN WE DO! SO I'LL SHOOT MYSELF!

THE AFTERNOON WEARS ON! ALL OF THE EGGS THAT SAM AND MARTHA HAD HIDDEN ARE FOUND! ALL... AND ONE EXTRA ONE... A WEIRDLY COLORED ONE... TEDDY'S FAVORITE...

AND WHEN BEDTIME FOR LITTLE TEDDY ARRIVES, THE GAILY COLORED EGGS ARE PLACED IN A BASKET BESIDE THE BED...



TEDDY'S MOTHER FLICKS OFF THE LIGHT...AND THE BOY'S ROOM IS THROWN INTO DARKNESS! SUDDENLY, TEDDY SITS BOLT UPRIGHT IN HIS YOUTH-BED...

HUH? GOLLY! THE EGG... THE PRETTY ONE! IT...IT'S GLOWING IN THE DARK!

TEDDY LEAPS OUT OF BED AND PICKS UP THE GLOWING EASTER EGG...

GEE! IT...IT FEELS FUNNY...LIKE...LIKE THERE'S SOMETHING ALIVE... INSIDE IT!

SUDDENLY, A VOICE EXPLODES IN LITTLE TEDDY'S BRAIN! IT SEEMS TO COME FROM ALL AROUND HIM AT ONE TIME...

HIDE ME... HIDE ME..

HUH! WHO'S THERE?

THE VOICE IN TEDDY'S BRAIN CONTINUES! TEDDY STARES AT THE WEIRDLY COLORED, GLOWING, THROBBING EGG...

TAKE ME SOMEWHERE... SOMEWHERE SAFE! HIDE ME!

GASP! THE EGG! IT...IT'S TALKING TO ME! AT LEAST...AT LEAST I THINK IT'S TALKING TO ME!

TEDDY FEELS STRANGE! HE LAYS THE LUMINESCENT EGG DOWN CAREFULLY AND BEGINS TO DRESS! THE VOICE IN HIS BRAIN GOES ON...

YOU ARE MY FRIEND! YOU MUST TAKE CARE OF ME! NO ONE MUST KNOW ABOUT ME! HIDE ME WHERE I WILL BE SAFE FROM PRYING EYES!

I KNOW! THE CAVE... IN BOGAN'S BLUFF! I'LL HIDE YOU THERE!

TEDDY SLIPS DOWN THE STAIRS, PAST THE LIVING ROOM WHERE HIS MOTHER AND FATHER SIT ENGROSSED IN THEIR NEWSPAPERS, AND OUT THE FRONT DOOR! HE SCRAMBLES ACROSS THE LAWN, UP THE ROAD, AND ON TO BOGAN'S BLUFF...

THIS IS IT! THIS IS THE CAVE I TOLD YOU ABOUT! THE ENTRANCE IS BEHIND THIS BIG BUSH!

THE BOY SQUEEZES BEHIND THE BUSH AND CARRIES THE GLOWING EGG INSIDE THE DANK, DARK CAVE...

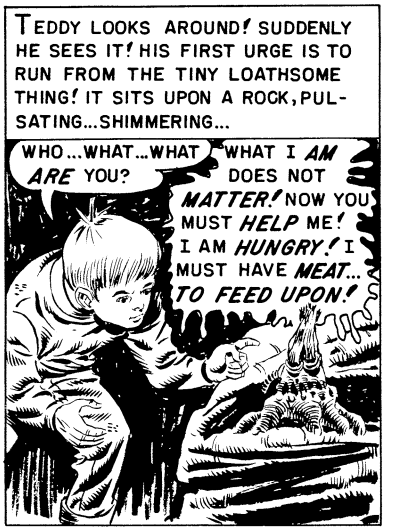
WILL I BE SAFE HERE? NO ONE COMES HERE?

UH...UH! NO ONE COMES HERE! THIS PLACE IS MY SECRET! I FOUND IT MYSELF!

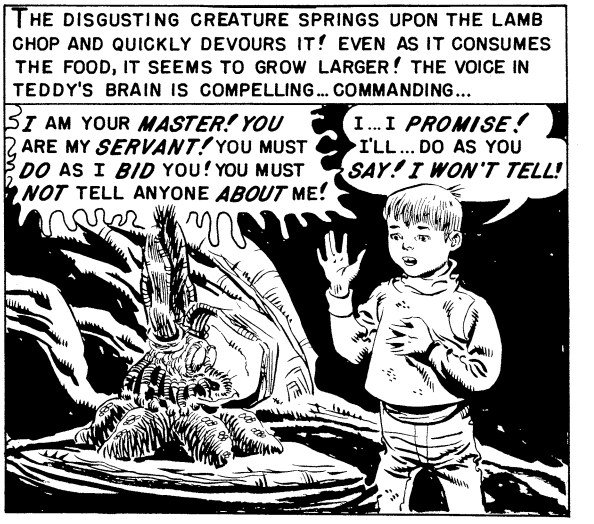
3

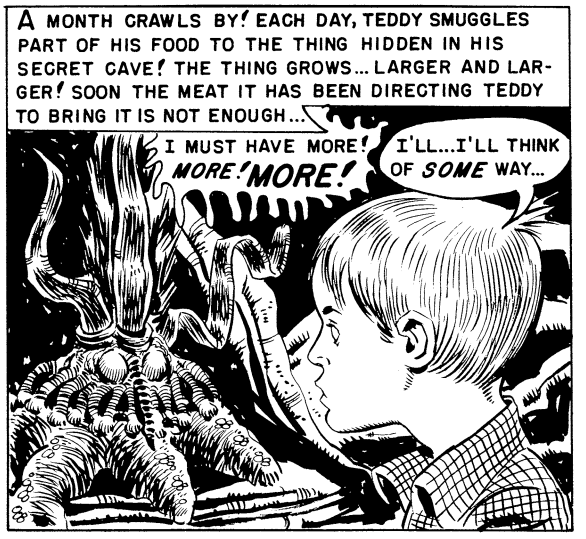
THE NEXT DAY, TEDDY HURRIES BACK TO THE CAVE AS IF DRAWN BY SOME IRRESISTIBLE FORCE! WHEN HE ARRIVES, HE FINDS THE EASTER EGG SMASHED...
SOMEBODY... SOMEBODY WAS *HERE!*

THEN THE VOICE CRASHES INTO TEDDY'S BRAIN AS HE STARES AT THE SHATTERED EGGSHELL...
NO! NO ONE WAS HERE! WHERE... *I* DID THAT! *I HAVE HATCHED!* WHERE *ARE* YOU?


TEDDY LOOKS AROUND! SUDDENLY HE SEES IT! HIS FIRST URGE IS TO RUN FROM THE TINY LOATHSOME THING! IT SITS UPON A ROCK, PULSATING... SHIMMERING...
WHO... WHAT... WHAT *ARE* YOU?
WHAT I *AM* DOES NOT *MATTER!* NOW YOU MUST *HELP* ME! I AM *HUNGRY!* I MUST HAVE *MEAT... TO FEED UPON!*

THAT NOONTIME, TEDDY'S MOTHER IS PLEASED AT HOW QUICKLY HER YOUNG SON FINISHES HIS LUNCH! BUT TEDDY HAS NOT EATEN THE NICE CHOP HIS MOTHER HAD PREPARED! INSTEAD...
HERE! I BROUGHT YOU SOME *MEAT!* IT'S *PART* OF MY *LUNCH!*
YOU MUST *CONTINUE* TO BRING ME MEAT... SO I MAY *GROW...*


THE DISGUSTING CREATURE SPRINGS UPON THE LAMB CHOP AND QUICKLY DEVOURS IT! EVEN AS IT CONSUMES THE FOOD, IT SEEMS TO GROW LARGER! THE VOICE IN TEDDY'S BRAIN IS COMPELLING... COMMANDING...
I AM YOUR *MASTER! YOU* ARE MY *SERVANT!* YOU MUST *DO* AS I *BID* YOU! YOU MUST *NOT* TELL ANYONE *ABOUT* ME!
I... I *PROMISE!* I'LL... DO AS YOU *SAY! I WON'T TELL!*


A MONTH CRAWLS BY! EACH DAY, TEDDY SMUGGLES PART OF HIS FOOD TO THE THING HIDDEN IN HIS SECRET CAVE! THE THING GROWS... LARGER AND LARGER! SOON THE MEAT IT HAS BEEN DIRECTING TEDDY TO BRING IT IS NOT ENOUGH...
I MUST HAVE MORE! *MORE! MORE!*
I'LL... I'LL THINK OF *SOME* WAY...

ONE NIGHT...
DADDY! DON'T YOU THINK I'M OLD ENOUGH TO GET AN *ALLOWANCE?*
HUH? WHY... OF COURSE, SON! THAT'S A *FINE* IDEA! THINK A HALF-A-BUCK A WEEK WILL DO?
4

BUT INSTEAD OF SPENDING HIS FIFTY-CENT ALLOWANCE ON LITTLE-BOY ITEMS, TEDDY...NOW UNDER THE COMPLETE CONTROL OF THE EVERGROWING THING IN THE CAVE...BUYS MEAT FOR IT...

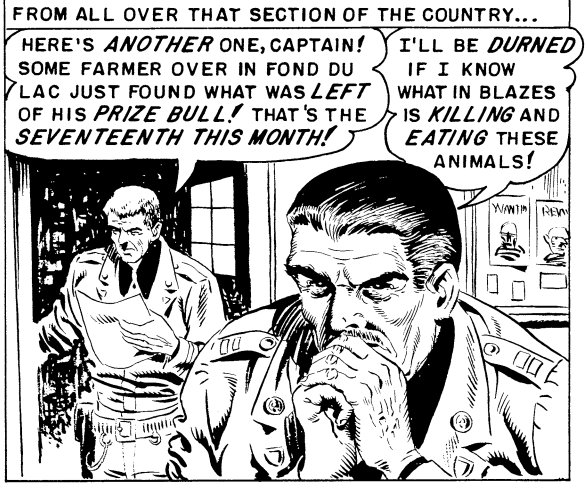
SO TEDDY BEGINS TO RUN ERRANDS FOR THE NEIGHBORS, MOW LAWNS, RAKE LEAVES, DO ANYTHING TO EARN EXTRA MONEY TO FEED THE DEMANDING CREATURE! AND THE THING CONTINUES TO GROW...

THE BOY BEGINS TO LOSE WEIGHT FROM MALNUTRITION! HIS FACE GROWS PALE AND SALLOW! GIVING THE THING EVERY SCRAP OF FOOD HE CAN SLIP FROM HIS MEAL PLATES BEGINS TO HAVE ITS EFFECT ON TEDDY...

NATURALLY, TEDDY OBJECTS TO BEING SENT AWAY! BUT HIS PARENTS INSIST, AND SO HE IS FORCED TO GO! NOW THE REPULSIVE THING IN THE CAVE IS ALONE! SLOWLY IT EMERGES FROM ITS HIDING PLACE...

MOVING ONLY AT NIGHT, AND USING THE SAME TELEPATHIC CONTROL IT EMPLOYED UPON THE BOY, THE LOATHSOME CREATURE IMMOBILIZES ANY UNSUSPECTING ANIMAL IT COMES ACROSS... THEN DEVOURS IT...

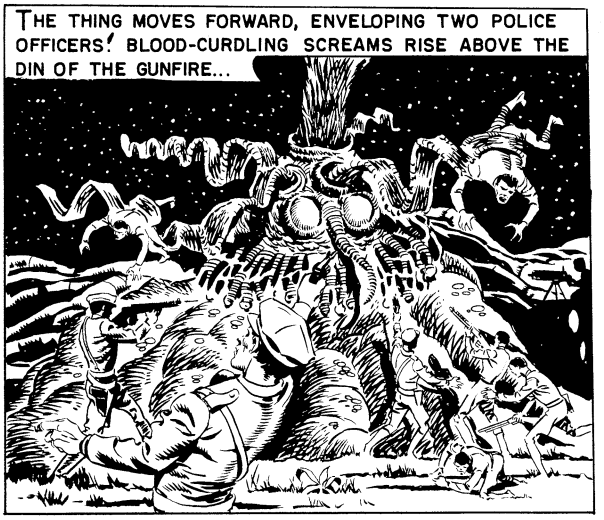
MONTHS GO BY! REPORTS POUR INTO THE AUTHORITIES FROM ALL OVER THAT SECTION OF THE COUNTRY...

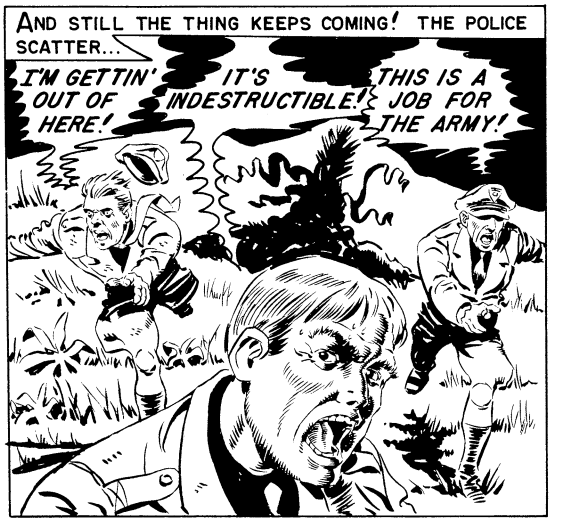

HERE'S ANOTHER ONE, CAPTAIN! SOME FARMER OVER IN FOND DU LAC JUST FOUND WHAT WAS LEFT OF HIS PRIZE BULL! THAT'S THE SEVENTEENTH THIS MONTH!
I'LL BE DURNED IF I KNOW WHAT IN BLAZES IS KILLING AND EATING THESE ANIMALS!

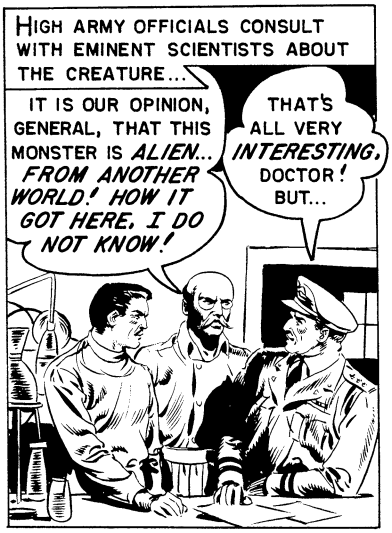
FINALLY, THE HIDEOUS MONSTER, NOW GROWN QUITE HUGE, IS SPOTTED MOVING ACROSS A FIELD...

POLICE ARE RUSHED TO THE SCENE! SEARCHLIGHTS, MOUNTED ON RIOT TRUCKS, ARE TRAINED ON THE DISGUSTING CREATURE...
WHAT IS IT?
IT LOOKS LIKE ONE OF THOSE THINGS OUT OF SCIENCE FICTION!
IT'S COMING TOWARD US!

TOMMY GUNS BEGIN THEIR STACCATO OF DEATH! PISTOLS... RIFLES... ALL AVAILABLE WEAPONS ARE BROUGHT INTO PLAY...
IT DOESN'T DO ANY GOOD!
BULLETS CAN'T KILL IT!
LOOK OUT! OH, LORD!


THE THING MOVES FORWARD, ENVELOPING TWO POLICE OFFICERS! BLOOD-CURDLING SCREAMS RISE ABOVE THE DIN OF THE GUNFIRE...


AND STILL THE THING KEEPS COMING! THE POLICE SCATTER...
I'M GETTIN' OUT OF HERE!
IT'S INDESTRUCTIBLE!
THIS IS A JOB FOR THE ARMY!


HIGH ARMY OFFICIALS CONSULT WITH EMINENT SCIENTISTS ABOUT THE CREATURE...
IT IS OUR OPINION, GENERAL, THAT THIS MONSTER IS ALIEN... FROM ANOTHER WORLD! HOW IT GOT HERE, I DO NOT KNOW!
THAT'S ALL VERY INTERESTING, DOCTOR! BUT...

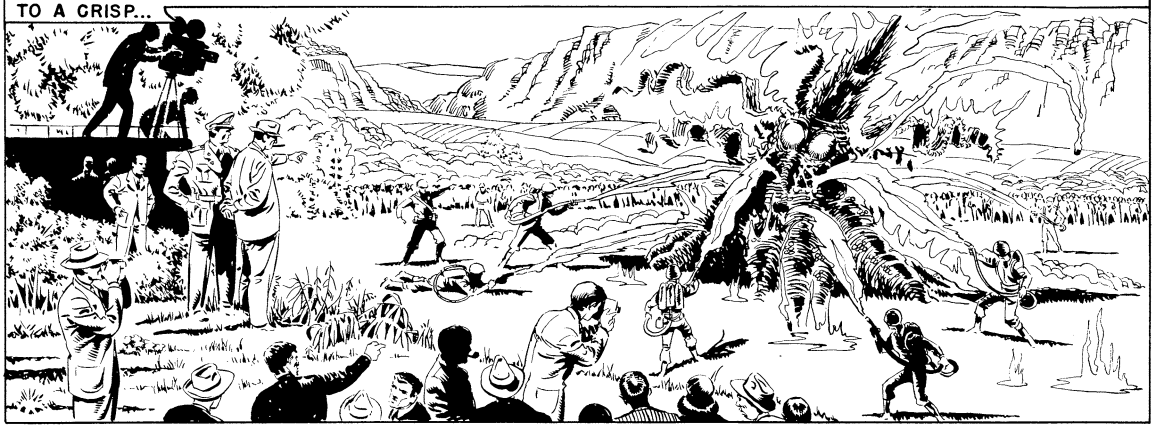
...WE'VE GOT TO DESTROY IT! HOW DO YOU SUGGEST WE GO ABOUT IT?
YOU SAY THAT BULLETS HAVE NO EFFECT? THEN I SUGGEST THE ONE SURE WAY...

WHAT IS THAT, DOCTOR?
FIRE! INTENSE HEAT!
6

IT IS ALMOST A YEAR AFTER ITS ARRIVAL ON EARTH IN THE FORM OF A BRILLIANTLY COLORED EGG THAT THE MONSTER IS FINALLY ELIMINATED! HUNDREDS OF SOLDIERS, ARMED WITH FLAME-THROWERS, SURROUND THE GIGANTIC REVOLTING CREATURE...

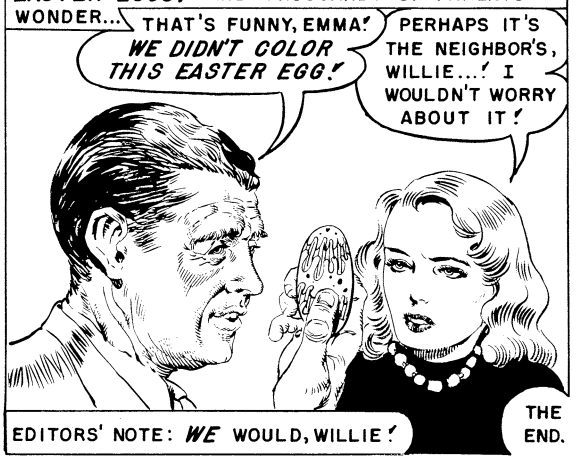
AN ORDER IS GIVEN, AND LETHAL FLAMING FLUIDS ARE SPRAYED FROM ALL DIRECTIONS UPON THE NAUSEATING THING...

LITTLE BY LITTLE, THE FLAME-THROWERS CONSUME THE HIDEOUS ALIEN BEING UNTIL IT IS BURNED TO A CRISP...



SOON, THOSE ONCE TERRORIZED BY THE MONSTROUS OUTER-SPACE CREATURE BREATHE EASILY AGAIN...! LIFE RETURNS TO NORMALCY! AND ON A WARM SUNDAY IN APRIL... *EASTER* SUNDAY... CHILDREN ROMP THROUGH GARDENS AND FIELDS SEARCHING FOR THE EASTER EGGS THEIR PARENTS HAVE HIDDEN THERE...

THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRYSIDE WHERE ONCE THE ALIEN CREATURE HAD ROAMED, *THOUSANDS* OF *CHILDREN* FIND *THOUSANDS* OF *GAILY COLORED EASTER EGGS!* AND THOUSANDS OF PARENTS WONDER...


THAT'S FUNNY, EMMA! *WE DIDN'T COLOR THIS EASTER EGG!*
PERHAPS IT'S THE NEIGHBOR'S, WILLIE...! I WOULDN'T WORRY ABOUT IT!
EDITORS' NOTE: *WE* WOULD, WILLIE!
THE END.

YOU'LL BE JARRED BY THE STARTLING WIND-UP TO *THIS* SCIENCE-FICTION YARN!

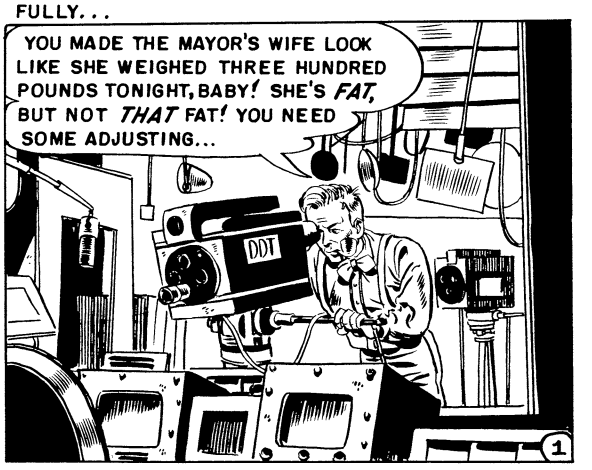
The BIG STAND-UP!

A SCIENCE-FICTION SUSPENSTORY

MY NAME IS BART THOMPSON! I'M A TELEVISION ENGINEER! YOU MAY NOT BELIEVE THE STORY I'M ABOUT TO TELL YOU... BUT IT'S *TRUE*, EVERY WORD OF IT! I KNOW, BECAUSE IT HAPPENED TO *ME!* IT ALL BEGAN THE NIGHT I'D DECIDED TO WORK LATE AT THE T.V. STUDIO WHERE I WAS EMPLOYED...

COMING, BART?
YOU GO AHEAD, JACK! I'M GOING TO HANG AROUND! I WASN'T PLEASED WITH CAMERA ONE'S PICTURE TONIGHT! THINK I'LL TRY AND ALIGN IT BETTER!

THE NIGHT'S TRANSMISSION TIME WAS OVER AND EVERYONE HAD GONE HOME! JACK WAS THE LAST TO LEAVE! I WENT OUT ONTO THE SOUND STAGE AND ROLLED CAMERA ONE OVER TO THE CONTROL ROOM WINDOW! I POINTED IT AT MY SEAT INSIDE AND FOCUSED CAREFULLY...


YOU MADE THE MAYOR'S WIFE LOOK LIKE SHE WEIGHED THREE HUNDRED POUNDS TONIGHT, BABY! SHE'S *FAT*, BUT NOT *THAT* FAT! YOU NEED SOME ADJUSTING...
DDT
1

THEN I WENT INTO THE CONTROL ROOM! I SAT DOWN AT THE MONITOR-PANEL AND FLIPPED ON CAMERA ONE'S MONITOR-SCREEN! THEN I CUT IN THE JUICE AND DROPPED THE TRANSMITTER HOOK-UP SO THE IMAGE WOULDN'T GO OUT OVER THE AIR! PRETTY SOON MY OWN SAD PUSS APPEARED ON THE PANEL...

BOY, YOU *DO* NEED ADJUSTING, BABY! I LOOK LIKE I JUST GOT SLAMMED ON THE HEAD WITH A *SLEDGEHAMMER!*

I WENT OUT TO THE CAMERA AND INCREASED THE VERTICAL DRIVE! THEN I CHECKED THE LINEARITY AND RETURNED TO MY SEAT...

THERE! THAT OUGHT TO... LOOK... *HUH? HEY! WHO'S KIDDIN' AROUND?*

THE FACE ON CAMERA ONE'S MONITOR-TUBE WAS NOT *MY* FACE! IT WAS THE FACE OF A *BEAUTIFUL GIRL...*

HEY! WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA! SOMEBODY TRYIN' TO BE *FUNNY?*

I FLICKED ON THE CONTROL ROOM MIKE AND STUDIO P.A. SYSTEM! MY VOICE ECHOED THROUGH THE DESERTED STUDIO...

LOOK, WHOEVER YOU ARE! I'M TRYIN' TO GET SOME *WORK* DONE! *STOP THE COMEDY* AND CUT IN CAMERA ONE... *HUH?*

SHUL-MRO-DUH!

I WAS LOSING MY TEMPER FAST! FIRST THAT GORGEOUS FACE... AND NOW SOME JIVE DOUBLE-TALK...

CLIMB OFF IT! I DIDN'T STAY LATE FOR FUN! JACK? YOU DOIN' THIS?

CRUS-FON-DUH-MOR-NYD-ALA-VORT!

I COULDN'T FIGURE IT OUT! CAMERA ONE WAS 'ON'! I COULD TELL BY THE GLOWING RED LIGHT ON THE TOP! AND IT WAS POINTED DIRECTLY AT ME! YET, THE MONITOR IN THE CONTROL ROOM CARRIED THE PICTURE OF THAT LUSCIOUS BABE! I PINCHED MYSELF! I FIGURED I MUST BE DREAMING...

OUCH!

OUCH? QUAD-NORT-DOR-VON-COST-DU-MALA-*BOD?*

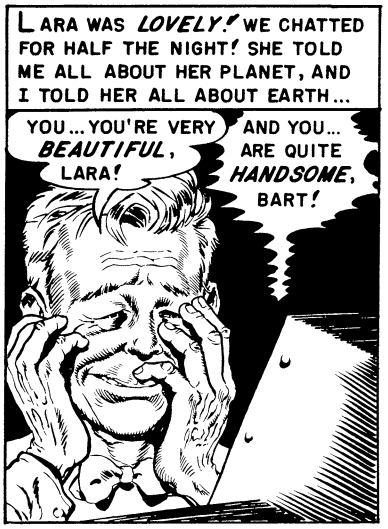
NO! I WAS WIDE AWAKE! SOMETHING FREAKISH WAS TAKING PLACE! UNLESS SOMEBODY'D DELIBERATELY REWIRED THE MONITOR-BOARD, THIS THING WAS IMPOSSIBLE! BUT I NEARLY TORE THE PLACE APART WHEN SHE STARTED TALKING ENGLISH...

WHO... ARE... *YOU? I...* AM... *LARA!* VIEW-GRAPH... ENGINEER... 7B2R! THIRD SHIFT... INTERPLANETARY COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION! HEADQUARTERS STATION... ZUNDA... ON PLANET 4!

HUH? WHA? AW, *CUT IT OUT, WILL YUH?* THAT'S ENOUGH *FOOLIN' AROUND!*

2

BUT SHE JUST KEPT ON TALKING! AND SHE WAS DEAD SERIOUS...
OPERATION...OF...INTER-PLANETARY COMMUNICATIONS...IS...NOT...FOOLING...AROUND! YOU...ARE...JAMMING...MY...WAVE-LENGTH! IDENTIFY...YOURSELF!
WHA...? WHY... I...I... LISTEN, CUTIE-PIE!...
THIS IS T.V. ENGINEER BART THOMPSON... STATION WZYR-TV... PLANET EARTH... SALARY $73.50 PER... AND I'LL KNOCK YOUR BOYFRIEND'S HEAD OFF WHEN I GET AHOLD OF...
PLANET... WHAT?
EARTH! LIKE HE'S GONNA BE BURIED SIX FEET UNDER! LOOK HERE, JACK! THAT'S ENOUGH!
EARTH? IN WHAT SOLAR SYSTEM IS YOUR PLANET LOCATED?
IN THE SOLAR SYSTEM WITH THE NINE PLANETS... INCLUDING THE ONE WITH THE RING... WHICH IS JUST WHAT I'M GONNA DO TO YOUR NECK...
THE ONE WITH THE RING! BUT THAT IS IMPOSSIBLE!
HUH? WHAT'S IMPOSSIBLE?
YOUR SOLAR SYSTEM IS EIGHTY LIGHT YEARS AWAY! THE ONE WITH THE RING... IT IS THE SIXTH PLANET FROM THE STAR?
THAT'S RIGHT! AND I'M ON THE THIRD...EARTH! SAY! IS THIS A JOKE OR ISN'T IT?
THIS IS NO JOKE, BART THOMPSON... STATION WZYR-TV...SALARY $73.50 PER! WE ARE EIGHTY LIGHT YEARS APART!
BUT, THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE! DO YOU SEE ME?
VERY CLEARLY!
BUT I'M NOT EVEN TRANSMITTING! I'M ON A CLOSED CIRCUIT!
OBVIOUSLY, IT IS AN INTERSTELLAR ELECTRONIC WARP!
SAY! HOW COME I CAN UNDERSTAND YOU? IF YOU'RE FROM SOME OTHER WORLD, HOW COME YOU SPEAK ENGLISH?
I DON'T SPEAK YOUR LANGUAGE! I SPEAK MY OWN! YOU HEARD IT BEFORE! I HAVE AN AUTOMATIC TRANSLATOR HOOKED UP! IT'S A TYPE OF MECHANICAL-ELECTRIC BRAIN! IT TRANSLATES OUR RESPECTIVE LANGUAGES FOR US!
3


LARA WAS LOVELY! WE CHATTED FOR HALF THE NIGHT! SHE TOLD ME ALL ABOUT HER PLANET, AND I TOLD HER ALL ABOUT EARTH...
YOU... YOU'RE VERY BEAUTIFUL, LARA!
AND YOU... ARE QUITE HANDSOME, BART!

BUT... YOU... YOU COULDN'T COME HERE, COULD YOU?
WE... WE COULD! BUT IT WOULD TAKE A VERY LONG TIME! TEN... MAYBE FIFTEEN ROTATIONS OF YOUR PLANET ABOUT ITS STAR!

TOWARDS MORNING, I CONFESSED TO LARA...

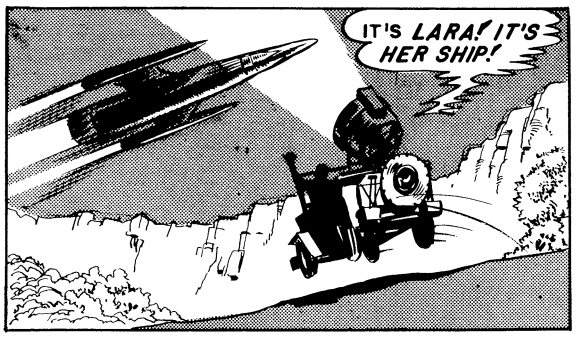
THEN SHE WAS GONE! I CHECKED EVERYTHING CAREFULLY... NOTING EACH ADJUSTMENT OF THE EQUIPMENT IN THE CONTROL ROOM! THEN I WENT HOME! THE NEXT NIGHT...

AS SOON AS EVERYONE WAS GONE, I SET UP THE EQUIPMENT EXACTLY AS IT HAD BEEN THE PREVIOUS NIGHT! LARA CAME IN SHARP...

THAT NIGHT I LEARNED THAT LARA'S SOCIETY HAD A MARRIAGE-FAMILY SET-UP ALSO...

WE WENT ON LIKE THAT FOR A YEAR! EVERY NIGHT I'D TALK TO LARA ACROSS THE VOID OF SPACE! WE FELL DESPERATELY AND PASSIONATELY IN LOVE! I LONGED FOR HER! THEN, ONE NIGHT...
I HAVE WONDERFUL NEWS, DARLING! ONE OF OUR SCIENTISTS HAS JUST PERFECTED A NEW TYPE SPACE DRIVE! IT WOULD ONLY TAKE HALF A ROTATION TO GET TO YOUR PLANET NOW!
COULD YOU...?
I COULD STEAL THE EXPERIMENTAL ROCKET SHIP! IF I GOT AWAY, THEY'D NEVER BE ABLE TO STOP ME... AND I'D COME TO YOU! BUT, IF I WERE CAUGHT...IT WOULD MEAN MY LIFE!
MY LIFE IS EMPTY WITHOUT YOU, LARA!
THEN I WILL DO IT! BUT WE MUST PLAN EVERYTHING CAREFULLY! VERY CAREFULLY!
WE STARTED BY MY TRANSMITTING MAPS OF EARTH TO LARA! IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT SHE KNOW EXACTLY WHERE TO LAND...
YOU'VE GOT THE HEMISPHERE AND CONTINENT! NOW HERE'S A MORE DETAILED MAP OF THE AREA! SEE! YOU'LL LAND HERE...ON THESE SALT FLATS!
I'D CHOSEN THE MOST BARREN AREA I COULD THINK OF FOR LARA TO COME DOWN IN! I WANTED TO KEEP THIS WHOLE THING QUIET! AFTER TWO WEEKS OF PLANNING AND PREPARATION...
JUST COME DOWN AS NEAR TO THE BLINKING LIGHT AS POSSIBLE! THAT'LL BE ME!
GOOD-BYE, BART! SEE YOU IN...SIX MONTHS YOU CALL IT?
YES, BABY! SIX MONTHS! AND...PLEASE... BE CAREFUL! I...I LOVE YOU SO!
I'LL BE CAREFUL! I'VE ALREADY BRIBED THE GUARD! IT WILL BE EASY! TILL WE MEET...
THE NEXT NIGHT, I TRIED TO MAKE CONTACT WITH LARA...BUT SHE DIDN'T COME IN! I KNEW SHE WAS ON HER WAY! THE NEXT SIX MONTHS WERE SHEER AGONY... THE AGONY OF WAITING! FINALLY, THE TIME DREW NEAR...
I BORROWED IT! I GAVE THE ARMY A TALL STORY ABOUT ANOTHER MOVIE STAR AND DROVE OUT TO THE SALT FLATS! AS THE HOUR DREW NEAR, I STARTED FLASHING THE LIGHT INTO THE STAR-STUDDED SKY...
REMEMBER THAT JEEP WITH THE SEARCHLIGHT MOUNTED ON IT THAT WE USED WHEN THAT MOVIE STAR CAME TO TOWN, JACK?
YEP! WE GOT IT FROM THE ARMY! THEY SAID WE COULD HAVE IT ANYTIME!
HERE, LARA! RIGHT HERE, HONEY!
5

SUDDENLY, THE SKY ABOVE ME WAS FILLED WITH A ROARING, AND THE SEARCHLIGHT CAUGHT A GLEAMING SILVER SHAPE...

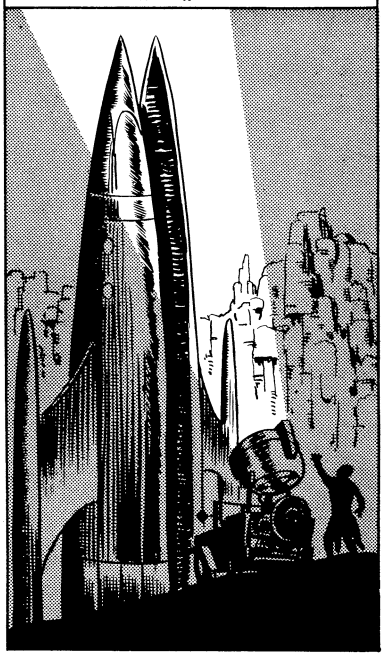


LARA'S ROCKET SHIP DROPPED TAIL-FIRST TOWARD THE FLATS TO THE NORTH OF ME...

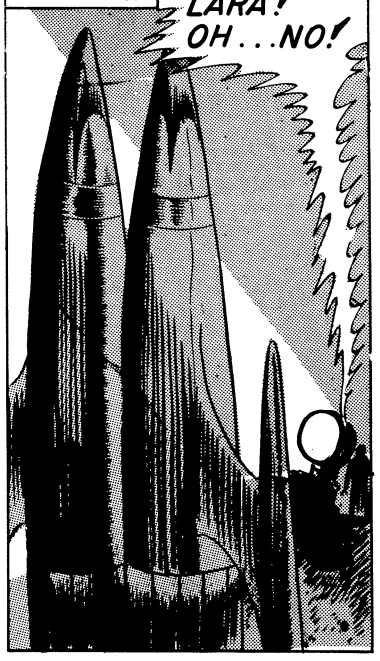
THE SHIP CAME TO REST ABOUT A MILE AWAY! I SPED ACROSS THE FLATS TOWARD IT, THE SEARCHLIGHT TRAINED ON IT...

AS I NEARED LARA'S SHIP, A STRANGE THING BEGAN TO HAPPEN...

IT WAS LARA'S SHIP! IT SEEMED TO BE SPLITTING IN TWO... FROM STEM TO STERN...



...AND AS THE TWO HALVES OF THE GIANT SHIP PARTED WIDER, I SCREAMED...



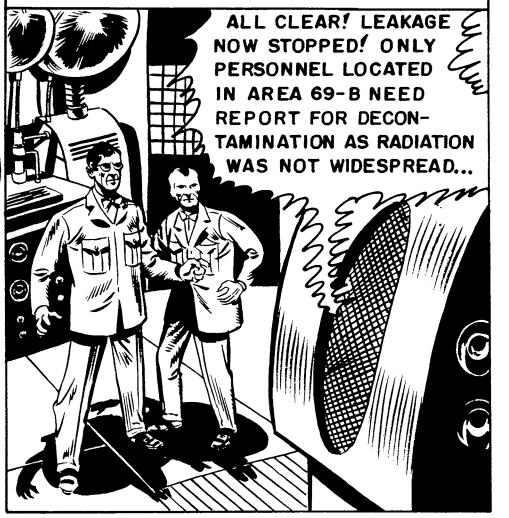
LARA LOOKED EXACTLY AS SHE'D APPEARED ON THE T.V. MONITOR SCREEN! THE ONLY TROUBLE WAS SHE *STOOD* ABOUT *TWO HUNDRED FEET TALL*...

THEY SHALL INHERIT

THE SCREAMING SIREN WAILED ITS PERSISTENT WARNING! THROUGHOUT THE GIGANTIC BUILDING THAT HOUSED THE ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION'S SAVANNAH RIVER ATOMIC PILE, RED LIGHTS FLASHED AN OMINOUS STACCATO! FRENZIED FIGURES SCURRIED DOWN DIMLY LIT CORRIDORS! RENOWNED SCIENTISTS TURNED FROM THEIR WORK TO STARE WITH WIDE EYES AT THE BLINKING DANGER SIGNALS ABOVE THEIR HEADS! A P.A. SYSTEM BEGAN TO SQUAWK IRRITABLY! IN THE CONTROL ROOM JUST BEYOND THE ATOMIC PILE...

DO SOMETHING! SHE'S 'SPILLING OVER'! STOP THE RADIATION!
THE GEIGER COUNTER'S GOING CRAZY! HURRY! BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!
ATTENTION! ALL PERSONNEL ... BUILDING THREE! ATOMIC PILE...LEAKING! DANGEROUS RADIATION EMINATING FROM AREA 69-B! PERSONNEL IN THIS AREA WILL REPORT IMMEDIATELY FOR DECONTAMINATION... SECTION X-2...
ORLANDO

IT WAS OVER AS QUICKLY AS IT HAD BEGUN! THE TROUBLE CAUSING THE RADIATION LEAK WAS DISCOVERED AND RECTIFIED ALMOST IMMEDIATELY! IN THEIR LABORATORY IN BUILDING SIX OF THE SAVANNAH RIVER PROJECT, DOCTOR JORDAN HESTON AND PROFESSOR ERNEST KRINSKY BREATHED A SIGH OF RELIEF AS THE P. A. SYSTEM REPORTED. . .


ALL CLEAR! LEAKAGE NOW STOPPED! ONLY PERSONNEL LOCATED IN AREA 69-B NEED REPORT FOR DECONTAMINATION AS RADIATION WAS NOT WIDESPREAD...

WELL, JORDAN! THAT WAS A CLOSE CALL, EH?
LUCKY THE LEAK WAS FOUND! IT COULD HAVE DEVELOPED INTO A TERRIBLE CATASTROPHE! SHALL WE CONTINUE WITH OUR CALCULATIONS, ERNEST?
1

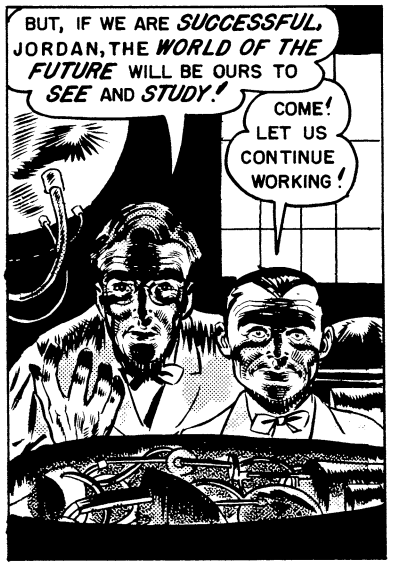
YES...OF COURSE! ER...WHERE WERE WE? OH, YES! WE WERE DISCUSSING THE PROPERTIES OF U-235 IN RELATION TO THE TIME-SPACE CONTINUUM! NOW, ACCORDING TO OUR CALCULATIONS...
ONCE AGAIN, ORDER WAS RESTORED TO THE A.E.C.'S SAVANNAH RIVER ATOMIC PROJECT! THE RENOWNED SCIENTISTS RETURNED TO THEIR WORK...
AH! COLONEL ABEL! COME IN, SIR!
AFTERNOON, DOCTOR HESTON... PROFESSOR KRINSKY...
I HOPE YOU TWO WEREN'T ALARMED OVER THE LITTLE ACCIDENT WE JUST HAD!
NOT AT ALL, COLONEL! ANYONE HURT?
QUIGLY SUFFERED A NASTY BURN WHEN HE REPLACED THE FAULTY PILE ROD...BUT OTHERWISE THERE WERE NO SERIOUS INJURIES! ER...HOW ARE YOU TWO DOING?
FAIRLY WELL, COLONEL! WE'VE ALMOST COMPLETED OUR CALCULATIONS!
ABOUT HOW SOON DO YOU THINK IT'LL BE BEFORE YOU START BUILDING YOUR MACHINE?
POSSIBLY WITHIN THE NEXT MONTH, COLONEL! OH... ERNEST AND I WOULD LIKE TO THANK YOU...
YES! WE'RE VERY GRATEFUL TO THE COMMISSION FOR ALLOWING US TO USE YOUR FACILITIES!
DON'T THANK ME, GENTLEMEN! THE BOYS AT THE PENTAGON WERE INTERESTED IN YOUR THEORIES! YOU NEEDED FISSIONABLE MATERIALS... AND WE HAD THEM! SO... YOU WERE INVITED!
WE HOPE WE WON'T DISAPPOINT YOU, SIR! AFTER ALL...AS YOU SAY... THEY'RE ONLY THEORIES!
WE'RE GLAD TO TAKE THAT RISK, GENTLEMEN! DON'T FORGET! IF YOU SUCCEED...THE ARMY COULD CERTAINLY MAKE GOOD USE OF A TIME MACHINE! GOOD DAY!
GOOD DAY, SIR!
GOOD DAY!
2

TWO MONTHS LATER, IN THE OFFICE OF COLONEL CARLTON ABLE, COMMANDING OFFICER OF THE SAVANNAH RIVER PROJECT...
ALL RIGHT, LIEUTENANT! GO AHEAD WITH YOUR REPORT!
JUST THREE MORE ITEMS, SIR! THE TWO SCIENTISTS IN BUILDING SIX HAVE REQUESTED WE SUPPLY THEM WITH ANOTHER SEVENTY-FIVE MILLIGRAMS OF U-235...

OKAY! I'LL SIGN FOR THAT! WHAT ELSE?
A BRIGHT NOTE, SIR! QUARTERMASTER CORPS REPORTS A SHARP DECLINE IN THE RAT POPULATION THROUGHOUT THE PROJECT! LOOKS LIKE CHEM WARFARE DIVISION DID A GOOD JOB OF EXTERMINATING THEM!

SORRY TO DISAPPOINT YOU, LIEUTENANT! CHEM WARFARE HASN'T STARTED THEIR EXTERMINATION PROJECT! ER... WHAT'S NEXT?
OH? ER... YES! AH... THE PENTAGON WANTS A REPORT ON PROGRESS...

MEANWHILE, IN BUILDING SIX...
WELL, JORDAN! IT'S BEEN OVER ONE MONTH SINCE WE STARTED BUILDING OUR TIME-SPACE CONTINUUM-TRANSVERSER!
...AND IT WILL BE SIX MORE BEFORE WE ARE FINISHED, ERNEST!


BUT, IF WE ARE SUCCESSFUL, JORDAN, THE WORLD OF THE FUTURE WILL BE OURS TO SEE AND STUDY!
COME! LET US CONTINUE WORKING!

FIVE MONTHS AFTER THE ACCIDENT, IN COLONEL ABEL'S OFFICE...
WHAT ELSE, LIEUTENANT!
ABOUT THE RAT SITUATION, SIR! QUARTERMASTER REPORTS THAT IT HAS GOTTEN PROGRESSIVELY WORSE IN THE PAST TWO MONTHS!

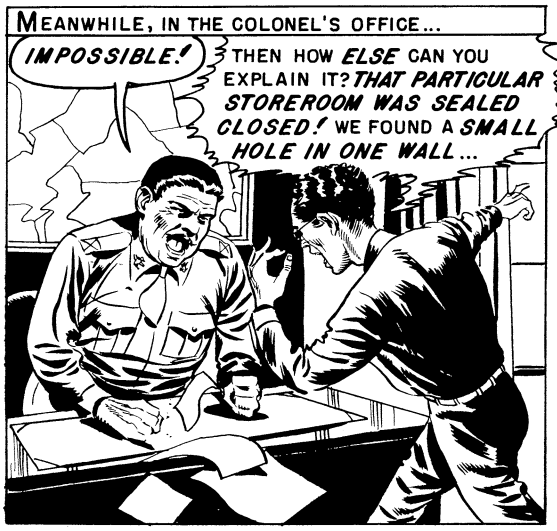
BUT I THOUGHT THEY REPORTED THE POPULATION WAS ON THE DECLINE!
IT WAS...FOR A WHILE! BUT LATELY THEY'VE COME BACK STRONGER! AND THEY'VE BECOME INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT TO CONTROL! THE LITTLE DEVILS ARE CLEVER!
3

SEVEN MONTHS AFTER THE ACCIDENT... IN BUILDING SIX...
WELL, JORDAN! ONE MONTH MORE AND WE'LL BE READY TO TEST OUR TRANSVERSER!
ONE MONTH MORE AND WE'LL KNOW IF OUR THEORY IS CORRECT!
THINK OF WHAT WONDERFUL SCIENTIFIC ACHIEVEMENTS WE WILL DISCOVER WHEN WE LOOK INTO THE FUTURE!
THE COMING ATOMIC AGE... SPACE TRAVEL ... AMAZING NEW INVENTIONS...
ONE MONTH LATER...
YES, LIEUTENANT?
IT'S AMAZING, SIR! ALL OF CHEM WARFARE'S ATTEMPTS TO EXTERMINATE THE RATS HAVE FAILED! THEY SEEM TO BE EXTREMELY CRAFTY! THEY THWART EVERY DEVICE USED...
MEANWHILE... IN BUILDING SIX...
TOMORROW WE TEST THE TRANSVERSER, EH, ERNEST? WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS?
WE WILL USE ANIMALS FIRST! WE MUST BE SURE THAT THE SHOCK OF BEING SENT INTO THE FUTURE IS NOT HARMFUL TO A LIVING ORGANISM!
THE NEXT DAY...
PLACE THE CAT ON THE FORCE-FIELD PLATFORM, JORDAN! WE WILL SEND IT AHEAD FIVE HOURS IN TIME!
RIGHT, ERNEST! THERE! THE CONTROLS ARE SET! PRESS THE 'ADVANCE SWITCH'!
THE 'ADVANCE SWITCH' WAS THROWN, AND THE PURRING FELINE BEGAN TO GROW HAZY...
IT'S WORKING, JORDAN! LOOK!
IF THE CAT REAPPEARS IN FIVE HOURS, WE WILL BE SURE!
MEANWHILE...
LET'S HAVE IT, LIEUTENANT!
THE RATS AGAIN, SIR! IT'S GETTING RIDICULOUS! YOU MAY NOT BELIEVE THIS, BUT THEY OPENED A DOOR TO ONE OF THE FOOD LOCKERS BY REMOVING THE HINGE PINS...
T
4

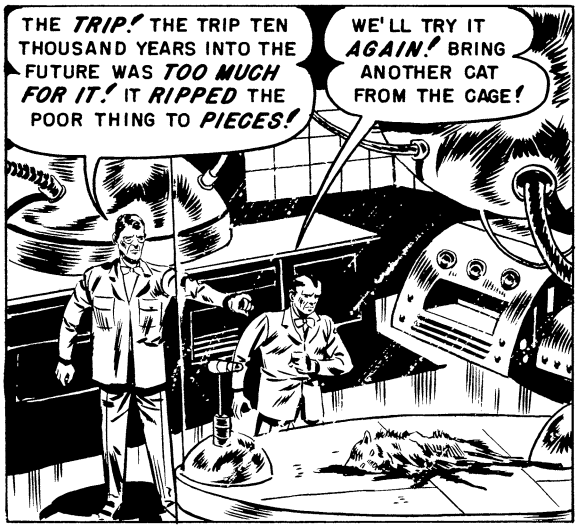
FIVE HOURS LATER, IN BUILDING SIX, THE CAT SUDDENLY REAPPEARED ON THE FORCE-FIELD TABLE...
IT'S HERE, JORDAN! THE CAT IS HERE! SUCCESS! WE'VE DONE IT!
BEING SENT AHEAD IN TIME SEEMS TO HAVE HAD NO ILL EFFECTS ON THE ANIMAL, ERNEST!
NOT FIVE HOURS, ANYWAY! BUT WHAT ABOUT FIVE YEARS...OR FIVE THOUSAND YEARS?
LET US TRY IT, ERNEST! LET'S SEND THE CAT FIVE THOUSAND YEARS INTO THE FUTURE!
THE CONTROLS WERE SET FOR FIVE THOUSAND YEARS, AND THE 'ADVANCE SWITCH' WAS THROWN...
IT'S GOING...
WE'LL LET IT STAY THERE FIVE MINUTES!
YES! FOR FIVE MINUTES THAT CAT WILL EXIST FIVE THOUSAND YEARS FROM NOW!
THEN WE WILL BRING IT BACK BY PRESSING THE 'RETURN SWITCH'!
MEANWHILE...
WHAT?
THAT'S WHAT MAJOR DOMOS INSISTS, SIR! HE SAYS IT HAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH THAT ACCIDENT WE HAD EIGHT MONTHS AGO!
FIVE MINUTES LATER...
ALL RIGHT, ERNEST! BRING THE CAT BACK!
RIGHT! HERE GOES!
SLOWLY, THE CAT REAPPEARED ON THE FORCE-FIELD PLATFORM...
GOOD LORD! LOOK AT IT!
ITS BACK IS ARCHED...ITS CLAWS DISTENDED! THE HAIR ON ITS NECK IS BRISTLING! IT'S SPITTING AND CLAWING...
5

SOMETHING FRIGHTENED IT! SOMETHING OUT THERE... IN THE FUTURE... FIVE THOUSAND YEARS FROM NOW!
I... I WONDER WHAT IT COULD HAVE BEEN!

SET THE CONTROLS FOR TEN THOUSAND YEARS AHEAD! WE'LL SEE WHAT HAPPENS!
RIGHT! HERE GOES...


MEANWHILE, IN THE COLONEL'S OFFICE...
IMPOSSIBLE!
THEN HOW ELSE CAN YOU EXPLAIN IT? THAT PARTICULAR STOREROOM WAS SEALED CLOSED! WE FOUND A SMALL HOLE IN ONE WALL...

FIVE MINUTES LATER...
IT... IT'S COMING BACK!
GOOD LORD! IT... IT'S DEAD! TORN TO SHREDS!


THE TRIP! THE TRIP TEN THOUSAND YEARS INTO THE FUTURE WAS TOO MUCH FOR IT! IT RIPPED THE POOR THING TO PIECES!
WE'LL TRY IT AGAIN! BRING ANOTHER CAT FROM THE CAGE!

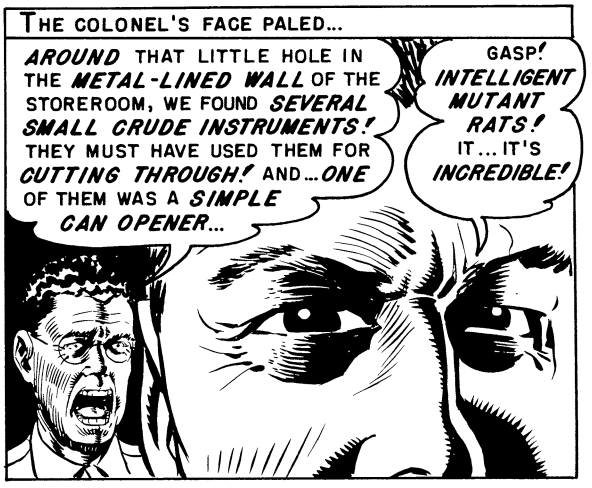
ANOTHER CAT WAS BROUGHT AND PLACED ON THE FORCE-FIELD TABLE! AGAIN THE 'ADVANCE SWITCH' WAS THROWN...
THERE IT GOES!
THREE TRIPS MAY HAVE BEEN TOO MUCH FOR THE FIRST CAT! PERHAPS THIS ONE WILL MAKE IT!
6

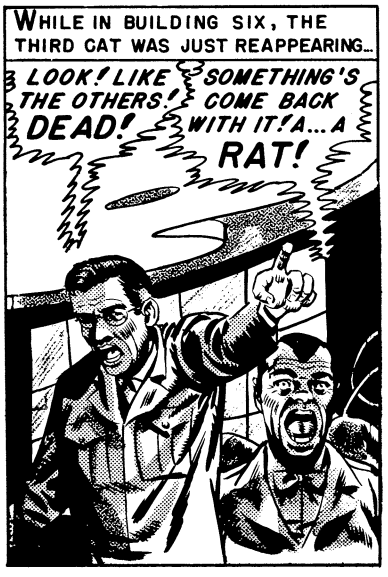
WHILE... I TELL YOU, SIR, THOSE CANS WERE OPENED WITH A CAN OPENER...
I DON'T BELIEVE IT!

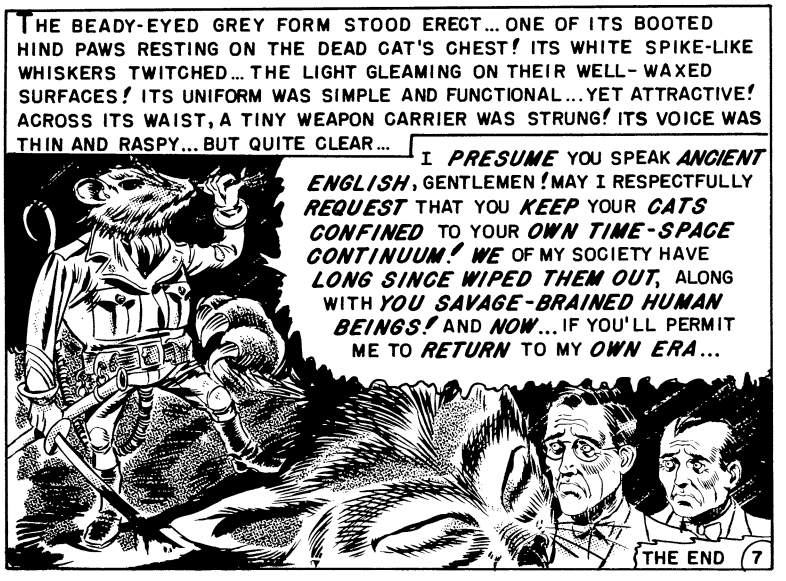
...AND IN BUILDING SIX...
ALL RIGHT! BRING IT BACK!
IT'S COMING...

GOOD LORD! AGAIN...
JUST LIKE THE OTHER ONE! CUT TO RIBBONS...

ANOTHER CAT WAS TAKEN FROM ITS CAGE...
CUT THE ACCELERATION THIS TIME! WE'VE GOT TO FIND OUT WHAT'S WRONG!
CHECK! OKAY! HERE GOES!


THE COLONEL'S FACE PALED...
AROUND THAT LITTLE HOLE IN THE METAL-LINED WALL OF THE STOREROOM, WE FOUND SEVERAL SMALL CRUDE INSTRUMENTS! THEY MUST HAVE USED THEM FOR CUTTING THROUGH! AND...ONE OF THEM WAS A SIMPLE CAN OPENER...
GASP! INTELLIGENT MUTANT RATS! IT... IT'S INCREDIBLE!


WHILE IN BUILDING SIX, THE THIRD CAT WAS JUST REAPPEARING...
LOOK! LIKE THE OTHERS! DEAD!
SOMETHING'S COME BACK WITH IT! A... A RAT!


THE BEADY-EYED GREY FORM STOOD ERECT... ONE OF ITS BOOTED HIND PAWS RESTING ON THE DEAD CAT'S CHEST! ITS WHITE SPIKE-LIKE WHISKERS TWITCHED... THE LIGHT GLEAMING ON THEIR WELL-WAXED SURFACES! ITS UNIFORM WAS SIMPLE AND FUNCTIONAL...YET ATTRACTIVE! ACROSS ITS WAIST, A TINY WEAPON CARRIER WAS STRUNG! ITS VOICE WAS THIN AND RASPY... BUT QUITE CLEAR...
I PRESUME YOU SPEAK ANCIENT ENGLISH, GENTLEMEN! MAY I RESPECTFULLY REQUEST THAT YOU KEEP YOUR CATS CONFINED TO YOUR OWN TIME-SPACE CONTINUUM! WE OF MY SOCIETY HAVE LONG SINCE WIPED THEM OUT, ALONG WITH YOU SAVAGE-BRAINED HUMAN BEINGS! AND NOW... IF YOU'LL PERMIT ME TO RETURN TO MY OWN ERA...
THE END 7

THE FOLLOWING "*E.C. QUICKIE*" SHOWS HOW YOUR EDITORS OBTAINED THEIR AUTHENTIC INFO RE: PLANET MARS! WE GOT THE DOPE THE TIME WE HIRED...

THIS FIRST "E.C. QUICKIE" BEGINS AT THE OFFICES OF THE ENTERTAINING COMICS GROUP ON A WARM SPRING DAY IN MAY! YOUR EDITORS, BILL AND AL, ARE BUSY RACKING THEIR BRAINS? FOR A NEW IDEA!
GET THIS, BILL! WE DO A SCIENCE-FICTION STORY ON *SEVENTEEN DIFFERENT WAYS* THE EARTH IS *WIPED OUT!* *GOOD?*
NO GOOD! WE COULDN'T *THINK* OF SEVENTEEN *NEW WAYS* TO *WIPE OUT THE EARTH!* WE'VE *DONE* IT EVERY *CONCEIVABLE* WAY *ALREADY!*

HMMMM! YOU'RE *RIGHT!* LET'S SEE! I *GOT* IT! *GET THIS!* THERE'S THIS *SCIENTIST* SEE... AND HE'S GOT A *FEMALE ASSISTANT!* *SHE'S GORGEOUS!* *HE'S* MARRIED TO A *SHREW!* NOW, WHEN THE STORY OPENS...
THIS IS SOMETHING *NEW?* *C'MON!* WE'VE OVERDONE *THAT* ONE TOO! WHAT *WE* NEED IS SOMETHING *DIFFERENT...* SOMETHING *AUTHENTIC!* LIKE A... LIKE A *DOCUMENTARY* OF THE *FIRST LANDING ON MARS!*

HEY! THAT'S GREAT! MARS, EH? A DOCU-MENTARY, EH? REALLY AUTHENTIC, EH?
THAT'S WHAT I SAID... EH?
GEE! WE COULD DEVOTE A WHOLE BOOK TO IT! I CAN SEE IT NOW... "SPECIAL ISSUE!"
"A DOC-UMENTARY OF THE ACTION AT THE CHANGJIN CANAL!"
AW, CUT IT OUT! I'M SERIOUS!
HOW DO? I'M BILL! SERIOUS, EH? ANY RELA-TION TO DEADLY SERIOUS, THE NOTORIOUS HATCHET-SCIENTIST-KILLER, WHO, BACK IN THE TWENTY-FIFTH CENTURY, HACKED OUT A NAME FOR HIMSELF...
VERY FUNNY! I'M HYSTERICAL!
OH COME! IT WASN'T THAT HILARIOUS! ALTHOUGH I MUST ADMIT THAT AT TIMES MY SOPHISTICATED WIT AND CLEVER REPARTEE PRODUCE REACTIONS SOMEWHAT RESEM-BLING OUTBURSTS OF LAUGHTER...
ALL RIGHT, YOU SOPHISTICATED WIT! TELL ME HOW WE'RE GOING TO WRITE AN AUTHENTIC DOCUMENTARY ABOUT THE FIRST LANDING ON MARS, WHEN WE DON'T KNOW BEANS ABOUT THE PLANET!
SIMPLE! WE'LL GET THAT EXPERT ON MARS TO GIVE US THE LOWDOWN! YOU KNOW! THAT GUY THAT WROTE ALL THOSE BOOKS ABOUT THE PLACE! HE'S MADE A LIFE'S STUDY OF THE PLANET! HE'D BE JUST THE ONE...
HO, HO! AGAIN COMIC RELIEF! AND WHAT, DEAR HILARIOUS SCROOGE, ARE WE GOING TO PAY THIS EXPERT WITH... COPIES OF TWO-FISTED TALES?
DETAILS! ALWAYS DETAILS! PAY...? EH? WHY...WHY... YOU MEAN? YOU MEAN HE'LL WANT...
YES, KIDDO! HE'LL WANT THE REAL THING! FAT...GREEN... MONEY!
WHY DON'T I LEARN TO KEEP MY BIG MOUTH SHUT?
2

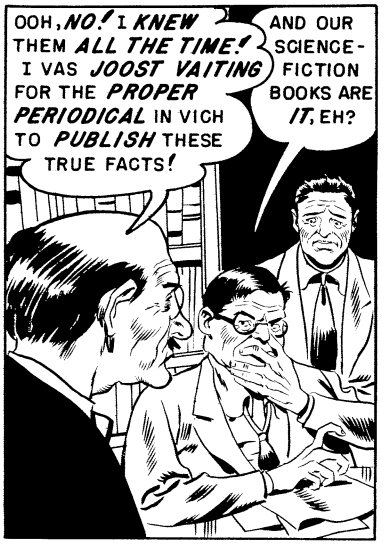
BUT NEVERTHELESS, THE IDEA IS A GOOD ONE ... SO FORSAKING ALL OF OUR TREASURED IDEALS, WE DECIDE TO HIRE THE EXPERT ON MARS ANYWAY... EVEN IF IT WILL COST...
BILL! THIS IS PROFESSOR GUERNSEY VON HOLSTEIN, THE EMINENT ASTRONOMER AND UNDISPUTED CHAMPION EXPERT ON THE PLANET MARS!
HI, PROF! GRAB A CHAIR AND PLOP!
VOT HE SAY?
HE SAID SIT DOWN, PROFESSOR!
OH! DANK YOU! NOW, IN MY FURST BOOK ON MARS, I BROUGHT OP DE QUESTION OF DE CANALS...
C'MON, PROF! YOU DON'T ACTUALLY HOLD TO THAT OLD ROUTINE ABOUT THE CANALS? I THOUGHT THAT THEORY WENT OUT WITH LOW PRICES...
OH, NO! DE CANALS... ISS CANALS, MISTER GAINZ! UND ON DE CANALS ISS GONDOLAS! YOU KNOW! GENTLY FLOWING OFER DE PURPLE VATER!
FOR CRYIN' OUT LOUD, AL!
IT WAS YOUR IDEA, HOT SHOT!
NOW, IFF YOU ISS GOING TO DRAW A MARTIAN, YOU ISS HAVING TO DRAW HIM JOOST LIKE A HUMAN BEEENG!
YOU MEAN, THEY AIN'T TENTACLED, BUG-EYED, SLOBBERING BLOBS OF GOO?
OH, NO! MARTIANS ISS EXACTLY LIKE HUMAN BEEENGZ! ZEPT FOR VON LITTLE TING!
AND WHAT'S THAT, PROFESSOR?
VEN A MARTIAN ISS GETTING EXCITED, OUT FROM HIS HEAD IS POPPING TWO LITTLE ANTENNAS! THE CHARGE FROM ANGER ISS THEN SHOOTING ACROSS FROM VON ANTENNA TO DE ODDER! ISS, LIKE YOU SAY... BLOWING OFF STEAM! SUCH A PRETTY SPARK, TOO!
GET THIS CRUM OUT OF HERE, AL, BEFORE I...
AW, HE'S KIDDING, BILL! BESIDES...
... WE CAN'T KICK HIM OUT! WE SIGNED A CONTRACT! HE'S GOT TO DO THE JOB! IF HE DOESN'T, WE GO BANKRUPT!
I HAF A CLEVER LAWYER!
WHY DON'T I LEARN TO KEEP MY BIG MOUTH SHUT?!
TAP TAP TAP
3

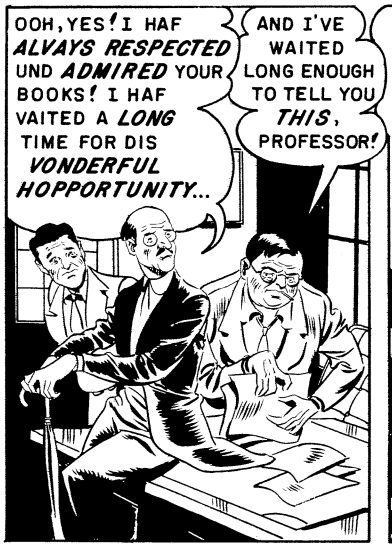
AND SO, PROFESSOR GUERNSEY VON HOLSTEIN SETS TO WORK ON THE SCRIPT FOR THE SPECIAL ISSUE ABOUT MARS! TWO DAYS LATER, HE'S BACK IN OUR OFFICES...

IN TWO DAYS YOU TYPED UP TWENTY-EIGHT PAGES OF SCRIPT?!
I HAF A CLEVER SECRETARY, TOO!
OKAY! OKAY! LET'S STOP THE HORSIN' AROUND! LEMME SEE!

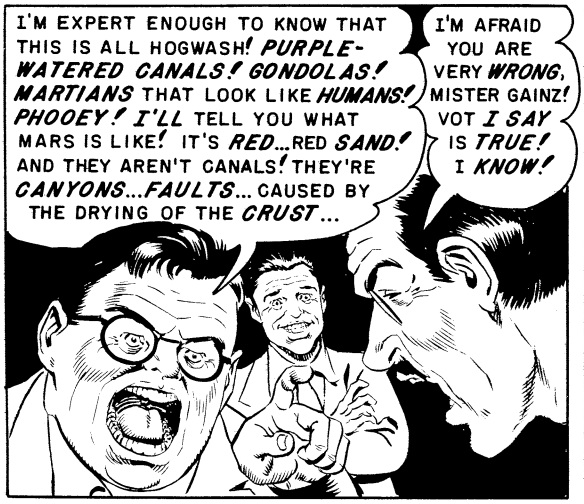
BILL POURS OVER THE SCRIPT! FIRST, THERE IS THE INK BOTTLE ON HIS DESK! *THAT* POURS OVER IT! THEN THERE'S THE BICARB WATER...

WHAT? YOU MEAN TO TELL ME THAT THIS GARBAGE IS SCIENTIFIC FACT?
ABZOLUTELY, MISTER GAINZ! THESE ARE FACTS NEFER BEFORE DISCLOSED!
AH! YOU JUST DISCOVERED 'EM, EH?


OOH, NO! I KNEW THEM ALL THE TIME! I VAS JOOST VAITING FOR THE PROPER PERIODICAL IN VICH TO PUBLISH THESE TRUE FACTS!
AND OUR SCIENCE-FICTION BOOKS ARE IT, EH?


OOH, YES! I HAF ALVAYS RESPECTED UND ADMIRED YOUR BOOKS! I HAF VAITED A LONG TIME FOR DIS VONDERFUL HOPPORTUNITY...
AND I'VE WAITED LONG ENOUGH TO TELL YOU THIS, PROFESSOR!

YOU'RE FIRED! THROUGH! WASHED UP! AS FAR AS YOUR CONTRACT IS CONCERNED, YOU CAN SUE ME IF YOU LIKE! I'M NOT PRINTING THIS ROT!
ROT, YOU CALL IT? VOT DO YOU KNOW? I AM DE HEXPERT... NOT YOU!
RIP!


I'M EXPERT ENOUGH TO KNOW THAT THIS IS ALL HOGWASH! PURPLE-WATERED CANALS! GONDOLAS! MARTIANS THAT LOOK LIKE HUMANS! PHOOEY! I'LL TELL YOU WHAT MARS IS LIKE! IT'S RED...RED SAND! AND THEY AREN'T CANALS! THEY'RE CANYONS...FAULTS... CAUSED BY THE DRYING OF THE CRUST...
I'M AFRAID YOU ARE VERY WRONG, MISTER GAINZ! VOT I SAY IS TRUE! I KNOW!

PROFESSOR HOLSTEIN'S FACE GROWS QUITE RED AS HE SPEAKS! HE IS AWFULLY ANGRY! AND THE SPARK THAT SHOOTS ACROSS THE TWO ANTENNAE THAT POP FROM HIS HEAD IS INDEED... VERY PRETTY...

OF COURSE, WE WERE ONLY *KIDDING* IN THAT FIRST "*E.C. QUICKIE*"! WE GOT THE *STRAIGHT* DOPE A COUPLE OF MONTHS LATER WHEN WE RAN...

THIS SECOND "E.C. QUICKIE" STARTS IN THE SAME PLACE... OUR OFFICES! *WEIRD SPACE-OPERAS* NUMBER 69 IS FINALLY FINISHED...
WELL, BILL! *THAT'S THAT! WHEW!* THIS ONE WAS *REALLY* TOUGH!
YOU CAN SAY *THAT* AGAIN!

WELL, BILL! *THAT'S THAT! WHEW!* THIS ONE WAS...
OH, *SHUT UP!* ER, WHAT *IS* IT, SUZY?
MR. "*MUSCLES*" (I CAN MAKE *MEN* OUT OF YOU SCRAWNY HALF-PINTS IN *SIX* HOURS) *McGEE* HAS JUST *CANCELLED* HIS *AD* FOR WS-O#69, SIR!

GOOD LORD! THAT LEAVES US WITH PAGE 32 OPEN... BLANK... BARE!
IT MAY LOOK NOVEL! STILL...
OH, CUT IT OUT! WE'VE GOT TO FILL IT UP WITH SOMETHING! THINK, MAN! THINK!
I'M THINKING! STOP THE NOISE, ALREADY!
I GOT IT! WE'LL PHONY UP AN AD! YOU KNOW! AS A GAG!
HEY! I GOT JUST THE THING! LET'S ADVERTISE A ROUND-TRIP EXCURSION TO MARS!
AL GRABS A SHEET OF ILLUSTRATION BOARD, WHIPS OUT HIS RETIRED OLD BRUSH, AND SITS DOWN AT HIS COBWEBBY OLD BOARD...
PUT THIS DOWN! 'LEAVING AUGUST 8TH...FOR NINE WHOLE DAYS OF GLORIOUS SUMMERTIME VACATIONING...'
'FARE INCLUDES MEALS AND TWO DAYS AT A REPUTABLE MARTIAN HOTEL...'
'SEE THE MOON ON THE WAY! NO EXTRA CHARGES! ONE PRICE INCLUDES ALL!'
'$200 ROUND TRIP!' HEY! THIS IS GREAT!
WAIT A MINUTE! WHERE'S THIS EXCURSION LEAVING FROM, AND WHAT'S ITS NAME?
AW, WE'LL MAKE UP A NAME AND PLACE! LET'S SEE... I GOT IT! 'TRANS-SPACE MARS EXCURSION TOURS, LTD!'
'LEAVES AUGUST 8TH FROM GREENGRASS CEMETERY.. MAUSOLEUM "MARS"... 8:00 P.M. SHARP!' THAT'LL TIP 'EM OFF IT'S PHONY!
GREAT GAG, BILL! GREAT! HOW'S IT LOOK? I SKETCHED IN A PICTURE OF A HONEYMOON COUPLE BY A CANAL!
2

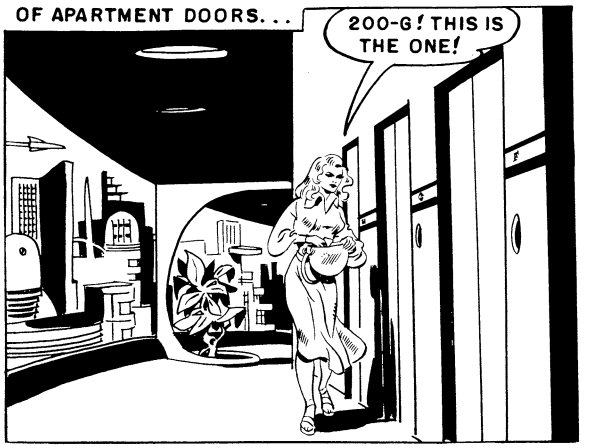
SO THE GAG AD IS PRINTED IN WS-O #69! WE'RE SO BUSY WITH THE NEXT ROUND OF MAGS, WE PROMPTLY FORGET ABOUT IT...UNTIL...
IS THIS THE OFFICES OF THE ENTERTAINING COMICS GROUP?
HEY, BILL! A READER!
YOU MEAN, THERE REALLY IS ONE?
OH, I ALWAYS READ E.C. MAGS! THEY'RE MY FAVORITES!
GIVE THIS MAN A BOX OF MARSH-MALLOWS, AL!
YES, SIR!
WHAT CAN WE DO FOR YOU, YOU DOLL?
OH, YOU'VE DONE ENOUGH ALREADY! IN FACT I WONDER HOW I CAN EVER REPAY YOU!
JUST KEEP BUYIN' E.C., CHUM! THAT'S THE BEST WAY...
YOU'VE CHANGED MY WHOLE LIFE! I OWE EVERYTHING TO YOU! MY WHOLE FUTURE HAP-PINESS... EVERYTHING! CAN I EVER THANK YOU?
ER...
...LET'S NOT GET DRAMATIC, BUB! OUR STUFF IS GOOD, BUT IT AIN'T THAT GOOD!
BUT IF IT WEREN'T FOR YOUR AD, I MIGHT NEVER HAVE MET HER!
AD? MET HER? WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT?
MY WIFE! I MET HER ON THE TOUR! SHE'S THE MOST BEAUTIFUL MARTIAN YOU EVER SAW! AND AFTER A WHILE, YOU GET USED TO THE THREE EYES... AND THE FOUR ARMS!
MARTIAN? TOUR? WHAT...
GOOD LORD! BILL! LOOK!
SHE COMES IN! HER THIRD EYE WINKS AT US KNOWINGLY! SHE EXTENDS HER TWO RIGHT HANDS, AND WE SHAKE THEM TIMIDLY...
THIS IS GLODSK! MY WIFE! WE BOTH WANT TO THANK YOU FOR ADVERTISING THE TRANS-SPACE MARS EXCURSION TOUR! ONLY YOU WERE WRONG ABOUT THE TIME! IT LEFT AUGUST 8TH, AT 8:30 PM!
SPA FON, GENTLEMEN!
THE END 3

THIS SCIENCE-FICTION STORY WITH ITS SURPRISE ENDING SHOULD STARTLE YOU!

STRICTLY BUSINESS!

A SCIENCE-FICTION SUSPENSTORY

THE VACUUM-LIFT SPED UPWARD CARRYING DIANNE MASTERS TO THE TWO-HUNDREDTH LEVEL IN A MATTER OF SECONDS! THE LIFT'S DOORS SLID OPEN NOISELESSLY, AND DIANNE STEPPED OUT ONTO THE SUN-LIT, PLUSH-CARPETED TIER! SHE MOVED DOWN THE CORRIDOR BETWEEN THE GLASS WALL AND THE LINE OF APARTMENT DOORS...



BEHIND DIANNE, THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY CITY GLEAMED IN THE MORNING SUNLIGHT! SHE RAISED A NERVOUS FINGER AND PUSHED THE BELL-BUTTON! INSIDE, A MELODIC CHIME RESOUNDED, AND FOOTSTEPS APPROACHED! THE DOOR TO 200-G SLID OPEN, AND A TALL, DARK-EYED, HANDSOME MAN SMILED AT HER...

YES? WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?
MY NAME IS DIANNE MASTERS! I'M HERE ABOUT THE ADVERTISEMENT YOU PUBLISHED IN THE MORNING TELE-PAPER...
1

THE STRANGER NODDED AND STEPPED BACK...
AH! YES! COME IN!
THANK YOU!
DIANNE ENTERED THE APARTMENT! SHE GLANCED ABOUT AT THE EXQUISITE FURNISHINGS...
LIKE WHAT YOU SEE, MISS MASTERS?
OH, YES! IT'S VERY NICE, MR... MR...
CRAVEN... ALEC CRAVEN! SIT DOWN, MISS MASTERS!
YOU'D BETTER TELL ME ABOUT YOUR OFFER, MR. CRAVEN!
MY OFFER IS VERY SIMPLE, MISS MASTERS! I NEED A WIFE! IN RETURN, I CAN SUPPLY MY PROSPECTIVE MATE WITH ALL OF THE LUXURIES OUR SOCIETY AFFORDS!
A WIFE! BUT THE AD SAID THIS WAS A BUSINESS OFFER!
IT IS, MISS MASTERS! AS YOU SEE, I HAVE ALL THE WEALTH I NEED TO LIVE COMFORTABLY! HOWEVER, IT IS NECESSARY FOR ME, AS PART OF MY WORK, TO ASSUME AN AIR OF RESPECTABITY! OUR MARRIAGE WOULD BE JUST THAT... A BUSINESS ARRANGEMENT!
HOW... HOW LONG WOULD THIS... THIS ARRANGEMENT LAST, MR. CRAVEN?
THE USUAL THREE-YEAR MARRIAGE-CONTRACT PERIOD, MISS MASTERS! AT THAT TIME WE'LL NEGLECT TO RENEW... AND THE AUTOMATIC DIVORCE WILL BE INVOKED!
I SEE! AND THE TERMS...
STRICTLY BUSINESS, MISS MASTERS! WE WILL OCCUPY SEPARATE ROOMS! WE WILL GO AND COME AS WE PLEASE! IT WILL BE A MARRIAGE IN NAME ONLY! YOUR SALARY WILL BE HIGH... VERY HIGH!
BEFORE I GIVE MY ANSWER, MR. CRAVEN, I'D LIKE TO KNOW JUST WHY YOU FIND THAT YOU MUST BE MARRIED!
2

MR. CRAVEN'S FACE DARKENED! HE LOOKED AT DIANNE STERNLY...
AS I SAID, MISS MASTERS, THIS WILL BE A BUSINESS ARRANGEMENT! MY REASONS ARE MY OWN BUSINESS! I EXPECT YOU TO MIND YOURS! UNDERSTAND?
YOU NEEDN'T GET SO ANGRY, MR. CRAVEN!

I'M SORRY, MISS MASTERS! I JUST DON'T LIKE PEOPLE THAT PRY!
DO YOU MIND IF I ASK HOW MUCH YOU'RE PAYING FOR THIS... THIS BUSINESS DEAL?

BY THAT YEAR IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY, MARRIAGE LAWS HAD CHANGED CONSIDERABLY! THE MARRIAGE LICENSE HAD BECOME LIKE THE TWENTIETH CENTURY AUTOMOBILE LICENSE! IT HAD TO BE RENEWED! COUPLES WHO HAD NO DESIRE TO REMAIN MARRIED HAD ONLY TO LET THEIR MARRIAGE EXPIRE! THE DIVORCE COURT HAD VANISHED! THE HAPPILY MARRIED MERELY RENEWED THEIR LICENSE...THEREBY RENEWING, ALSO, THEIR DEVOTION...

AND SO, DIANNE MASTERS BECAME MRS. ALEC CRAVEN FOR A THREE-YEAR PERIOD...

ALEC DREW HIS WALLET FROM HIS POCKET...

HERE'S YOUR FIRST YEAR'S SALARY IN ADVANCE, DIANNE! TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS! I HOPE OUR ARRANGEMENT WILL BE SATISFACTORY TO BOTH OF US!
AREN'T YOU AFRAID I'LL RUN AWAY WITH THE MONEY, ALEC?

I'D BE GETTING OFF CHEAP, DIANNE! REMEMBER! YOU'RE MARRIED TO ME FOR THE NEXT THREE YEARS WHETHER YOU STICK AROUND OR NOT! FOR MY PURPOSES, THAT'S GOOD ENOUGH!
I WAS ONLY JOKING, ALEC! I DON'T WELSH ON BUSINESS DEALS! YOU CAN TRUST ME!
3

ALEC BID DIANNE GOOD NIGHT AND CROSSED THE APARTMENT TO HIS OWN ROOM! DIANNE HESITATED... THEN LOCKED HER BEDROOM DOOR...

THEN DIANNE WENT TO THE HUGE MIRRORED CLOSET AND SLID THE DOORS OPEN! INSIDE, HUNDREDS OF DRESSES AND SUITS HUNG NEATLY! DOZENS OF PAIRS OF SHOES LINED THE FLOOR-RACKS...

NEXT, SHE FLUNG OPEN THE DRESSING TABLE DRAWERS...

DIANNE COULDN'T BELIEVE HER EYES...

IT WAS, INDEED, A VERY SATISFACTORY BUSINESS ARRANGEMENT FOR DIANNE! AND SO, ON HER WEDDING NIGHT... ADORNED WITH JEWELRY, ANNOINTED WITH EXPENSIVE PERFUMES, WEARING AN EXPENSIVE GOWN... DIANNE CRAWLED INTO HER HUGE LAVISHLY UPHOLSTERED BED... ALONE, BUT HAPPY...

IN THE MONTHS THAT FOLLOWED, DIANNE TOOK TO HER NEW 'JOB' FEVERISHLY! ALEC WAS VERY PLEASED! OFTEN, AT NIGHT, HE WOULD ENTERTAIN! DIANNE PLAYED THE PERFECT HOSTESS...

ALEC WAS VERY SWEET TO DIANNE! THEIR RELATIONSHIP GREW WARMER AND WARMER...

BY THE END OF THE FIRST YEAR, DIANNE BEGAN TO WISH THAT HER MARRIAGE TO ALEC WAS...WELL... LESS BUSINESSLIKE! BUT ALEC REMAINED COLD...
WHAT DID YOU SAY, DEAR? I'M SORRY! I WAS READING!
I SAID I DIDN'T LOCK MY BEDROOM DOOR LAST NIGHT, ALEC!
OH? WELL, DON'T WORRY! YOU CAN TRUST ME! HMMM! I SEE IT'S TIME TO GO! SEE YOU TONIGHT, DIANNE!
'BYE, ALEC!
SOB ...SOB...SOB ...
YES, DIANNE WAS UNHAPPY! SHE HAD FALLEN IN LOVE WITH HER HUSBAND! AT FIRST IT HAD BEEN GRAND! CLOTHES, JEWELRY, EVERYTHING A WOMAN COULD WANT! EVERYTHING, THAT IS, EXCEPT ALEC...THE ONE THING DIANNE WANTED...
GOOD-NIGHT, DIANNE! SEE YOU IN THE MORNING!
ALEC! I... I... COME HERE A MOMENT, PLEASE!
YES, DIANNE? WHAT IS IT?
ALEC! WE...WE'VE BEEN MARRIED FOR ALMOST TWO YEARS NOW! DON'T YOU THINK THAT IT'S ABOUT TIME YOU ...YOU... KISSED ME?
I BEG YOUR PARDON, DIANNE! YOU'RE FORGETTING...THIS IS A BUSINESS ARRANGEMENT... STRICTLY BUSINESS!
ALEC! FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE! CAN'T YOU SEE I'M IN LOVE WITH YOU?
LOOK HERE, DIANE! YOU'LL JUST HAVE TO FORGET THIS FOOLISHNESS! LOVE IS OUT OF THE QUESTION! WE MUST KEEP THIS RELATIONSHIP ON A FRIENDLY BUSINESS BASIS... NOTHING MORE!
ALEC CRAVEN! I HATE YOU!
5

AS THE END OF THE THIRD YEAR DREW NEAR, DIANNE REALIZED THAT WITH IT CAME THE END OF THEIR MARRIAGE CONTRACT! SHE APPROACHED ALEC ONE NIGHT...
WE...OUR CONTRACT RUNS OUT IN THREE WEEKS, ALEC!
I KNOW, DEAR!
YOU'RE...YOU'RE NOT GOING TO WANT TO RENEW IT?
I'M AFRAID NOT, DEAR!
BUT ALEC! I LOVE YOU! DOESN'T THAT MEAN ANYTHING TO YOU? I KNOW YOU COULD LEARN TO LOVE ME...IN TIME!
SORRY, DIANNE!
ALEC! YOU KNOW THAT A MARRIAGE CONTRACT AUTOMATICALLY RENEWS ITSELF IF THE WIFE IS EXPECTING A CHILD, DON'T YOU?
YES, DEAR! I KNOW!
ALEC! I'M EXPECTING A CHILD! OH, I KNOW YOU'LL DENY IT...BUT THEY'LL BELIEVE ME! NO MAN AND WOMAN COULD LIVE TOGETHER FOR THREE YEARS...
BUT YOU'RE MISTAKEN, DIANNE! WE COULD!
YOU WANTED TO KNOW WHY I NEEDED A WIFE?! I'LL TELL YOU...NOW THAT OUR WORK IS COMPLETED! I BELONG TO A SPECIAL GROUP DEALING WITH THE SCIENCE OF CYBERNETICS! OUR WORK HAS BEEN SECRET! WE HAD TO APPEAR AS ORDINARY PEOPLE! YOU NOTICED THAT ALL OF MY ASSOCIATES THAT I'VE ENTERTAINED ARE MARRIED! WE COULDN'T AFFORD TO APPEAR SUSPICIOUS! IN THREE WEEKS, WE TAKE OVER... THERE ARE ENOUGH OF US NOW!
CYBERNETICS? BUT THAT... THAT...
YES, MY DEAR! THE SCIENCE OF MECHANICAL-ELECTRONIC LIFE! LOOK! SEE? YOU COULDN'T BE EXPECTING A CHILD, NOW, COULD YOU? NOT VERY WELL, WHEN YOUR HUSBAND IS A ROBOT!
THE END
6

THE COWBOY ROLLED OVER IN HIS BLANKET AND OPENED HIS SLEEPY EYES! THE FIRE HAD DIED DOWN! ITS WARMTH WAS ALMOST GONE! ONLY A FEW GLOWING EMBERS REMAINED! BEYOND THEM, HIS HORSE SNORTED AND PAWED THE SOFT EARTH. . .

THE HORSE WHINNIED, TUGGING AT THE REIN THAT FASTENED HIM TO THE SPRIG OF BRUSH! THE COWBOY GOT TO HIS FEET...

SUDDENLY, THE SNORTING HORSE TORE ITSELF LOOSE AND GALLOPED OFF INTO THE PRAIRIE NIGHT, ITS EYES GLOWING LIKE WHITE-HOT COALS...

CRAZY *CRITTER!* ACTED *SCARED STIFF!* MUST BE A *RATTLER* AROUND!

A DRIED SAGEBRUSH TWIG SNAPPED BEHIND THE COWBOY! HE SPUN AROUND AT THE SOUND...

WHO'S THERE? WHAT... WHA...

GOOD LORD!

THE GLOW FROM THE DYING FIRE CAST AN ORANGE PALLOR OVER THE TWO THINGS THAT MOVED TOWARD THE TERROR-STRICKEN COWBOY! HIS SWARTHY FACE PALED... HIS EYES BULGED...

STAY AWAY! WHATEVER YOU ARE... *STAY... YAAAAAAAAH!*

THE COWBOY TURNED TO RUN, BUT THE THINGS MOVED FAST! HE WAS INSTANTLY LIFTED... THEN CARRIED ACROSS THE PRAIRIE AT GREAT SPEED... HIS HYSTERICAL SCREAMS ECHOING INTO THE NIGHT...

YAAA

THE WEIRDLY SHAPED SHIP LOOMED UP OUT OF THE BLACKNESS! THE ALIEN THINGS CARRIED THE COWBOY INSIDE...

THE PORT BEHIND THEM SLAMMED SHUT WITH A CLANG...

AND WITH AN EAR-SPLITTING ROAR, THE SHIP ROSE SKYWARD INTO THE STAR-STUDDED BLANKET ABOVE...

2

THE DAZZLING LIGHT INSIDE THE SHIP BLINDED THE COWBOY MOMENTARILY! FINALLY, HIS EYES BECAME ACCUSTOMED TO THE BRILLIANCE, AND HE LOOKED AROUND! HE'D BEEN THROWN INTO A LARGE COMPARTMENT OF THE SHIP! THERE WERE OTHERS THERE... MEN LIKE HIMSELF...
WHAT...WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT? WHAT ARE THOSE... THOSE THINGS GOING TO DO WITH US?
SEARCH ME, COWPOKE! THEY YANKED ME FROM MY CAR!
I WAS CAMPIN' NEAR THE TRACKS, WAITIN' FOR A SLOW FREIGHT, WHEN THEY GOT ME!
HEY! LOOK OUT HERE!
THERE WERE FIFTEEN...MAYBE TWENTY OF THEM IN THE COMPARTMENT! THEY CROWDED AROUND THE WINDOW! OUTSIDE...FAR BELOW... THE EARTH FELL AWAY LIKE SOME GIANT BALLOON BEING SWIFTLY DEFLATED...
THEY'RE TAKIN' US INTO SPACE!
THEY'RE FROM ANOTHER WORLD!
LORD HELP US!
THE CAPTIVES WATCHED UNTIL THE EARTH DIMINISHED TO THE SIZE OF A PEA...
I GUESS WE'RE DONE FOR!
LISTEN! THE DOOR'S OPENING!
THE COMPARTMENT DOOR SWUNG OPEN, AND ONE OF THE THINGS STOOD FRAMED IN IT! IT LOOKED ABOUT...FROM ONE OF ITS UNFORTUNATE VICTIMS TO THE OTHER...
GENTLEMEN! IT WOULD BE WISE FOR ALL OF YOU TO CALM DOWN...
HEY! THE FREAKISH THING SPEAKS ENGLISH!
I AM FAMILIAR WITH ALL OF THE LANGUAGES SPOKEN ON YOUR PLANET! AS I SAID... YOU WOULD DO WELL IF YOU ALL CALMED DOWN AND PREPARED YOURSELVES FOR A LENGTHY TRIP!
HEY! WHERE YOU TAKIN' US?
WE ARE BRINGING YOU TO OUR PLANET! YOU WILL BE OUR GUESTS! YOU WILL BE TREATED WELL... GIVEN ALL THE COMFORTS OF YOUR OWN PLANET! I GUARANTEE THAT YOU WILL THOROUGHLY ENJOY YOURSELVES! AND WE WILL NOT DETAIN YOU TOO LONG!
OKAY, UGLY! WHAT'S THE CATCH?
CATCH? THERE IS NO CATCH! WE ARRIVE IN TEN DAYS! TILL THEN... PLEASANT JOURNEY, GENTLEMEN!
3

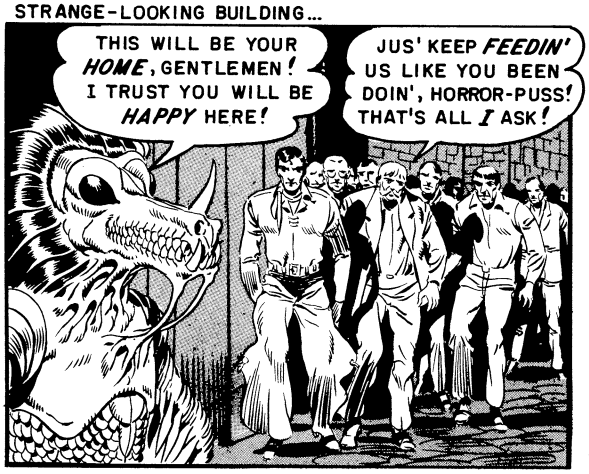
THE THING CLOSED THE COMPARTMENT DOOR, AND THE CAPTIVES HEARD THE LOCK SNAP SHUT...

I DON'T BELIEVE HIM!
TAKE IT EASY, COWBOY!
YEAH! MAYBE THEY'RE JUST BEING FRIENDLY! BESIDES...YOU AIN'T GONNA DO ANYTHIN' ABOUT IT ANYWAY!

EVERY FOUR HOURS OF THE LONG TRIP THROUGH SPACE, THE KIDNAPPED MEN RECEIVED FOOD... PASSED TO THEM THROUGH AN OPENING IN THE COMPARTMENT DOOR...

FINALLY...ON THE TENTH DAY...

SOON, THE SPACESHIP CARRYING THE CAPTURED EARTHMEN LANDED, AND THEY WERE GUIDED INTO A STRANGE-LOOKING BUILDING...

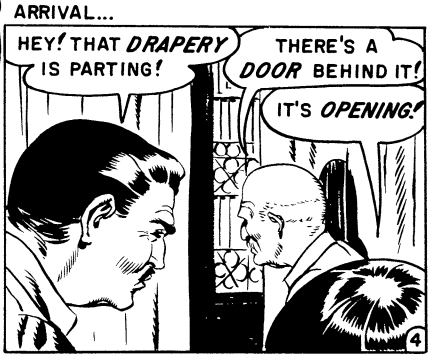

THIS WILL BE YOUR HOME, GENTLEMEN! I TRUST YOU WILL BE HAPPY HERE!
JUS' KEEP FEEDIN' US LIKE YOU BEEN DOIN', HORROR-PUSS! THAT'S ALL I ASK!

THE EARTHMEN WERE PLACED IN A LARGE ROOM! ASIDE FROM THE DOOR THROUGH WHICH THEY HAD ENTERED, THERE WERE NO OPENINGS! THE ROOM WAS LINED WITH COMFORTABLE SOFA BEDS... AND ALL ABOUT WERE TRAYS OF SUCCULENT MEATS, FLASKS OF SWEET-TASTING WINES, AND PLATTERS OF TEMPTING FRUIT...

IN THE DAYS THAT FOLLOWED, THE MEN GORGED THEMSELVES ON THE EXCELLENT FOOD BEFORE THEM! AS EACH TRAY WAS EMPTIED, IT WAS REFILLED BY ONE OF THEIR CAPTORS! THEY LAUGHED AND JOKED...

THIS IS THE LIFE, EH, COWBOY?
PLENTY OF SLEEP! PLENTY TO EAT! I'M GONNA GET FAT!
THERE'S SOMETHING BEHIND ALL THIS... SOME PURPOSE! I FEEL IT!
AW, KNOCK IT OFF, HORSE BRAIN!

A WEEK PASSED...THEN TWO! THE MEN GREW RESTLESS... BORED! THEY TIRED OF STUFFING THEMSELVES! FINALLY, ABOUT THREE WEEKS AFTER THEIR ARRIVAL...



A FIGURE STEPPED THROUGH THE HIDDEN DOOR.

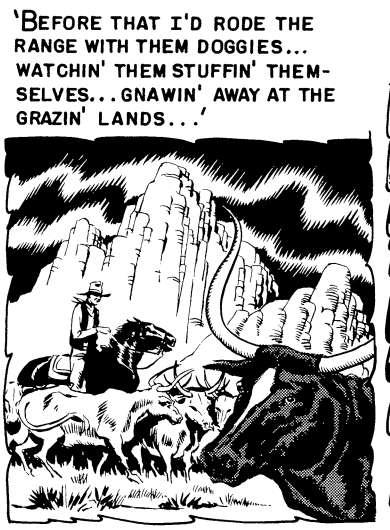
THE BEUTIFUL GIRL GLIDED ABOUT AMONG THE CAPTIVE MEN...SMILING AT THIS ONE...STROKING THAT ONE'S CHEEK... BLOWING KISSES...

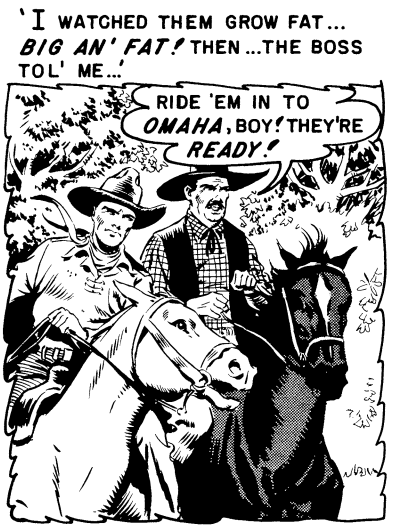
THE ATTRACTIVE EARTH GIRL DROPPED HER EYES COYLY AND NODDED...

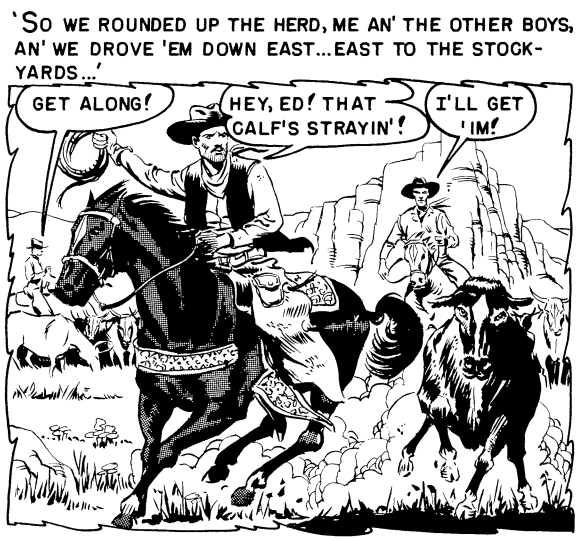
THE GIRL PUT HER FINGERS TO HER LIPS...

THEY LINED UP! THE GIRL WENT TO THE DOOR AND OPENED IT! IT WAS DARK BEYOND! SHE WINKED AND ENTERED...

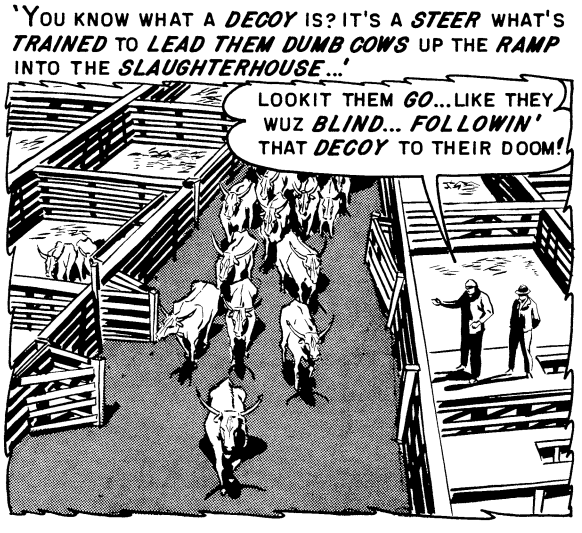
WHEN THOSE THINGS *CAPTURED* ME, I WAS COMIN' BACK FROM *OMAHA!* I'D HERDED SOME *STEERS* TO THE *STOCK-YARDS* THERE!

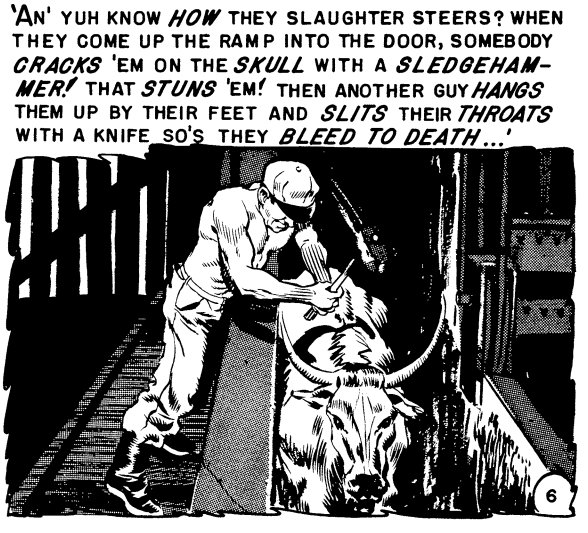

'BEFORE THAT I'D RODE THE RANGE WITH THEM DOGGIES... WATCHIN' THEM STUFFIN' THEMSELVES... GNAWIN' AWAY AT THE GRAZIN' LANDS...'


'I WATCHED THEM GROW FAT... *BIG AN' FAT!* THEN ...THE BOSS TOL' ME...'
RIDE 'EM IN TO *OMAHA*, BOY! THEY'RE *READY!*


'SO WE ROUNDED UP THE HERD, ME AN' THE OTHER BOYS, AN' WE DROVE 'EM DOWN EAST... EAST TO THE STOCK-YARDS...'
GET ALONG!
HEY, ED! THAT CALF'S STRAYIN'!
I'LL GET 'IM!

'YOU KNOW WHAT *HAPPENS* TO THEM DOGGIES WHEN THEY GET TO THE YARDS? THEY PEN 'EM UP... SELL 'EM... AND *DRIVE* 'EM TO THE *SLAUGHTERHOUSES...*'
OKAY! THIS BATCH IS READY!
BRING IN THE DECOY, SID!
RIGHT!


'YOU KNOW WHAT A *DECOY* IS? IT'S A *STEER* WHAT'S *TRAINED* TO *LEAD THEM DUMB COWS* UP THE *RAMP* INTO THE *SLAUGHTERHOUSE...*'
LOOKIT THEM *GO*... LIKE THEY WUZ *BLIND... FOLLOWIN'* THAT *DECOY* TO THEIR DOOM!


'AN' YUH KNOW *HOW* THEY SLAUGHTER STEERS? WHEN THEY COME UP THE RAMP INTO THE DOOR, SOMEBODY *CRACKS* 'EM ON THE *SKULL* WITH A *SLEDGEHAMMER!* THAT *STUNS* 'EM! THEN ANOTHER GUY *HANGS* THEM UP BY THEIR FEET AND *SLITS* THEIR *THROATS* WITH A KNIFE SO'S THEY *BLEED TO DEATH...*'
6

VERY INTERESTING, COWPUNCHER! BUT THE GIRLS ARE WAITIN'! WHAT'S ALL THIS GOT TO DO WITH THEM?
CAN'T YOU SEE? WE'RE LIKE CATTLE!
THEY'VE FATTENED US UP... LET US STUFF OURSELVES WITH FOOD... FATTENED US FOR THE KILL!
FELLOWS! THE GIRLS ARE WAITING!
SHE'S THE DECOY! THE ONE THAT LEADS US TO OUR DOOM! CAN'T YOU SEE? BELIEVE ME!
THEY'VE WAITED SO LONG...
DON'T LISTEN TO HER! WE'RE FOOD FOR THOSE CREATURES! THAT'S THE SLAUGHTER-HOUSE IN THERE!
W...WHAT DO YOU THINK, GUYS ?
AW...HE... HE'S CRAZY!
YEAH! YOU'RE CRAZY, COWBOY! C'MON! THEM DAMES HAVE BEEN WAITIN' TOO LONG!
THIS WAY, BOYS! RIGHT THIS WAY!
C'MON, COWBOY! YOU'LL BE SORRY...

AS EACH EARTHMAN CAME THROUGH THE DOORWAY, FOLLOWING THE WELL-TRAINED DECOY, ONE OF THE ALIEN CREATURES STUNNED HIM WITH A BLOW FROM A BLUNT HAMMER-LIKE WEAPON! ANOTHER QUICKLY KNELT AND SLIT HIS THROAT WITH A RAZOR-SHARP INSTRUMENT, NOT UNLIKE A KNIFE!

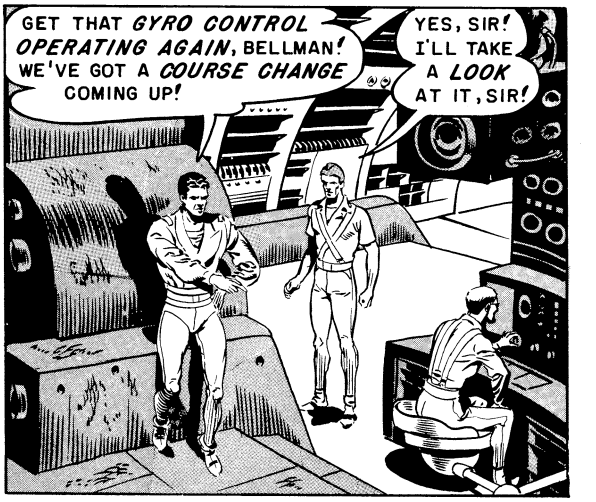
REVULSION!
Joe Orlando
IT WAS AN OLD SHIP! ITS OUTSIDE HULL NO LONGER GLEAMED BRIGHT AND DAZZLING! THE SURFACE WAS PITTED AND POCKMARKED WITH THE BATTLE SCARS OF COUNTLESS FLIGHTS THROUGH THE ASTEROID BELT! INSIDE ITS TIME-WORN CONTROL COMPARTMENT, ITS COMMANDER, MARTIN KREEGER, CURSED AND SPAT UPON THE PAINT-PEELED FLOOR...
BLASTED GYRO CONTROL! IT'S ON THE FRITZ AGAIN!
SHALL I GET BELLMAN UP HERE, SIR? WE'VE GOT A CHANGE OF COURSE COMING UP IN SIX HOURS!
1

COMMANDER KREEGER LIT A CIGARETTE AND SCOWLED...
YEAH! GET HIM UP HERE, LARSON!
BELLMAN! THIS IS CONTROL! GET UP HERE... ON THE DOUBLE! THE GYRO'S OUT AGAIN!

THE COMMANDER LOOKED AROUND THE CONTROL ROOM DISGUSTEDLY.
BEATS ME WHY THEY DON'T JUNK THIS OLD TUB, LARSON! ONE OF THESE DAYS, IT'S GOING TO FALL APART!
IT'S A GOOD SHIP, SIR! IT'S JUST OLD... THAT'S ALL!

OLD IS RIGHT! LOOK AT THIS LOG! SIXTEEN ROUND TRIPS TO ALVAIR IN SEVEN YEARS! WHY... !@#X!ZG!
WHAT'S WRONG, COMMANDER?

BLASTED ROACH! HOPPED OUT OF THE LOG! THIS OLD SCOW IS CRAWLING WITH 'EM!
YES, SIR!
BELLMAN REPORTING, SIR!


GET THAT GYRO CONTROL OPERATING AGAIN, BELLMAN! WE'VE GOT A COURSE CHANGE COMING UP!
YES, SIR! I'LL TAKE A LOOK AT IT, SIR!

BELLMAN BEGAN TO REMOVE THE INSTRUMENT PANEL OF THE GYRO CONTROL! THE COMMANDER CURSED AS THE ROACHES SCURRIED OUT FROM BENEATH IT...
CAN'T WE DO ANYTHING ABOUT THESE BLASTED BUGS, BELLMAN?
I'LL SPRAY THE SHIP AGAIN, SIR! IT HELPS FOR A WHILE.

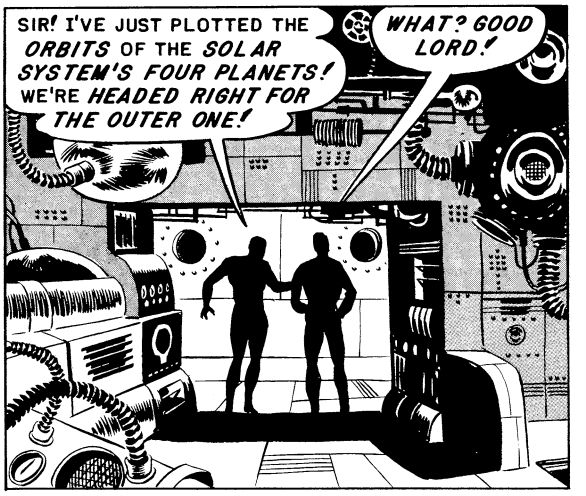
KREEGER SHUDDERED...
EVERY TIME I SEE ONE OF THOSE THINGS, IT MAKES ME SHIVER! ONCE I WAS IN A RESTAURANT...
THEY'RE MORE SCARED OF YOU, SIR, THAN YOU ARE OF THEM!
SOMETIMES I WONDER, BELLMAN!
2.

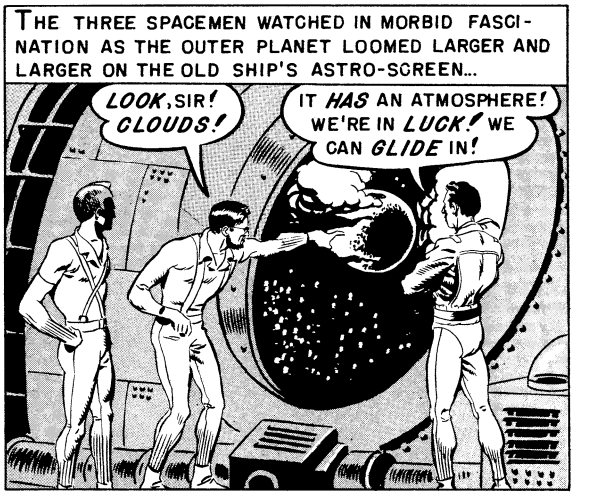
WONDER, LARSON? WHAT ABOUT?
WELL, SIR! SOMETIMES... WHEN I'M OFF DUTY AND I'M ON MY BUNK DOWN IN QUARTERS... I WATCH THOSE BUGS! AND I GET TO THINKING...
D'YA HEAR THAT, COMMANDER? LARSON THINKS!
SHUT UP, BELLMAN! GO AHEAD, LARSON!
I KEEP THINKING HOW LUCKY WE ARE... WE HUMAN BEINGS!
LUCKY? HOW?
WELL, SIR! WHAT IF THE INSECTS... THE ROACHES, FOR EXAMPLE... HAD DEVELOPED WITH EVOLUTION? WHAT IF THEY'D BECOME THE MASTERS ON EARTH INSTEAD OF US?
AW, CLIMB OFF IT, LARSON!
IT COULD HAVE HAPPENED, BELLMAN! THERE WAS NO LAW THAT SAID THE MAMMALS HAD TO DEVELOP INTO THE HIGH FORM WHICH IS MAN! THE INSECTS COULD JUST AS WELL HAVE EVOLVED IN THAT DIRECTION...
IT WAS MAN'S BRAIN... HIS ABILITY TO REASON... HIS INTELLIGENCE... WHICH MADE HIM THE SUPERIOR RACE ON EARTH, LARSON!
TRUE, SIR! YET, ALTHOUGH THE INSECT BRAIN IS MICROSCOPIC IN SIZE, IT IS MOST INTRICATELY AND ELABORATELY ORGANIZED! IT SUPPLIES THE INSECT WITH A RIGID INSTINCTIVE BEHAVIOR! IN MAN, THIS BEHAVIOR IS LEARNED THROUGH EXPERIENCE AND MEMORY! MAN POSSESSES LITTLE INSTINCT COMPARED TO THE INSECT!
ARE YOU TRYING TO SAY THAT RELATIVELY SPEAKING... IN SIZE, THAT IS... THE INSECT BRAIN IS BETTER THAN MAN'S?
FAR SUPERIOR, SIR! GIVEN THAT INSTINCT WHICH THE INSECT POSSESSES, AND ADD TO IT THE BRAIN SIZE OF MAN WITH ITS ABILITY TO RETAIN MEMORY PATTERNS AND EXPERIENCES AND YOU'D HAVE A FAR MORE DEVELOPED FORM OF LIFE THAN MAN WILL EVER BE!
WELL ALL I CAN SAY IS YOUR INSTINCT-STINKERS HAVE STRIPPED THE INSULATION FROM THIS GYRO HOUSING! IT'S SHOT... KAPUT!
WHAT? BUT... THE COURSE CHANGE!
3

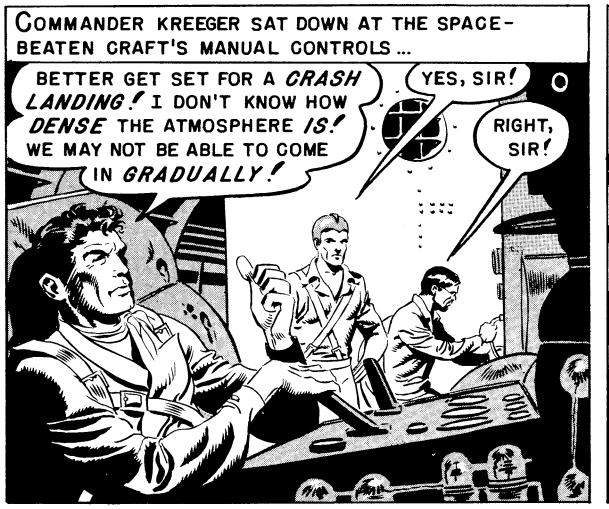
LOOKS LIKE WE'RE GOING TO MISS ALVAIR, SIR! AND UNLESS I CAN REWIRE THIS THING, WE'LL JUST HEAD OUT INTO SPACE AD INFINITUM!
YOU AND YOUR BLASTED BUGS, LARSON! WE CAN'T EVEN SWING THE SHIP AROUND TO BLAST TO A STOP! WE'VE GOT TO GO ON LIKE THIS... DRIFTING ...AT SIX TIMES THE SPEED OF LIGHT!

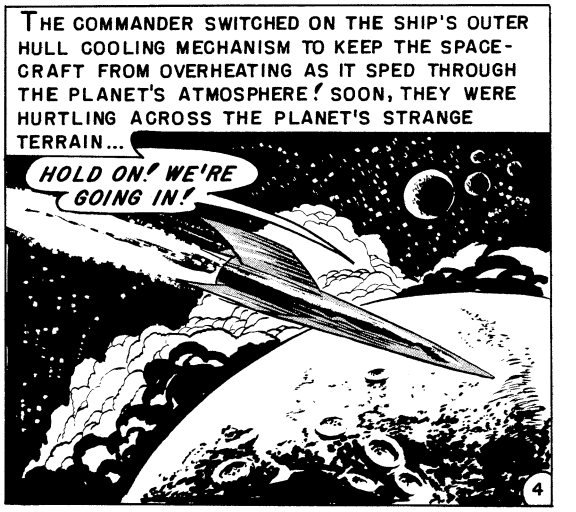
IT WAS ELEVEN DAYS LATER THAT THE ROACH-INFESTED VETERAN OF THE SPACEWAYS ENTERED THE STRANGE NEW SOLAR SYSTEM...
IT'S UNCHARTED, SIR! WE'RE REALLY OFF COURSE!
JUST PRAY WE DON'T GET INTO ANY OF ITS PLANETS' GRAVITATIONAL FIELDS!

WHY, SIR? WE COULD LAND!
IF IT HAD AN ATMOSPHERE, YES! BUT WE COULDN'T BRAKE THE SHIP IF IT DIDN'T! WE CAN'T SWING HER AROUND! WE'D CRASH...


SIR! I'VE JUST PLOTTED THE ORBITS OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM'S FOUR PLANETS! WE'RE HEADED RIGHT FOR THE OUTER ONE!
WHAT? GOOD LORD!

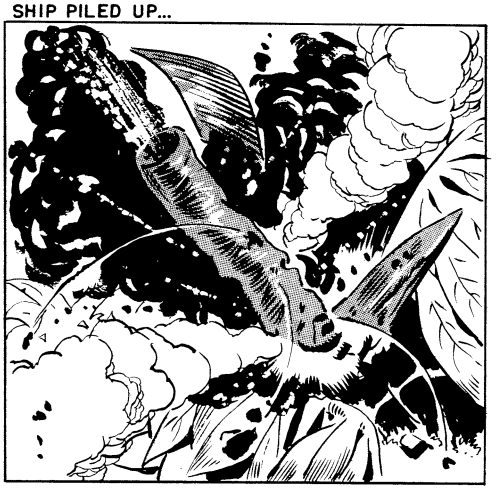

THE THREE SPACEMEN WATCHED IN MORBID FASCINATION AS THE OUTER PLANET LOOMED LARGER AND LARGER ON THE OLD SHIP'S ASTRO-SCREEN...
LOOK, SIR! CLOUDS!
IT HAS AN ATMOSPHERE! WE'RE IN LUCK! WE CAN GLIDE IN!


COMMANDER KREEGER SAT DOWN AT THE SPACE-BEATEN CRAFT'S MANUAL CONTROLS...
BETTER GET SET FOR A CRASH LANDING! I DON'T KNOW HOW DENSE THE ATMOSPHERE IS! WE MAY NOT BE ABLE TO COME IN GRADUALLY!
YES, SIR!
RIGHT, SIR!


THE COMMANDER SWITCHED ON THE SHIP'S OUTER HULL COOLING MECHANISM TO KEEP THE SPACECRAFT FROM OVERHEATING AS IT SPED THROUGH THE PLANET'S ATMOSPHERE! SOON, THEY WERE HURTLING ACROSS THE PLANET'S STRANGE TERRAIN...
HOLD ON! WE'RE GOING IN!
4

THE OLD SHIP DIPPED LOW, TOPPING THE PLANET'S ALIEN FOLIAGE! SUDDENLY...

THERE WAS AN EAR-SPLITTING ROAR AS THE SHIP PILED UP...



IT WAS SEVERAL MINUTES LATER WHEN SOMETHING STIRRED IN THE WRECKAGE! COMMANDER KREEGER STOOD UP...

THE SURVIVORS BURIED THEIR FELLOW SPACE TRAVELER IN A SMALL CLEARING BENEATH THE PLANET'S TOWERING OVERGROWTH...

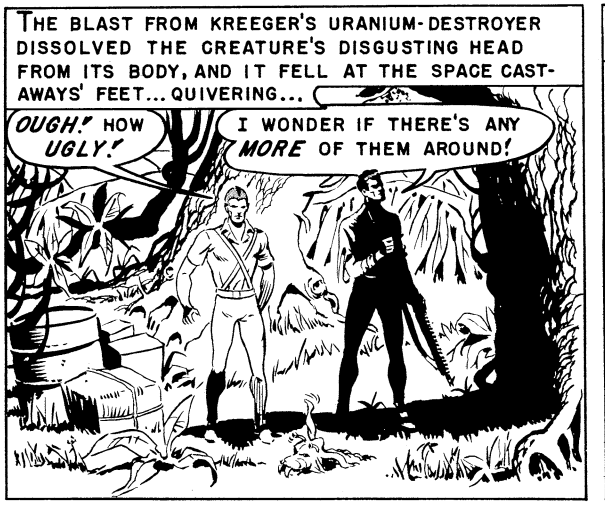
POOR LARSON! HIM AND HIS BUGS! LOOK WHAT A MESS THEY GOT HIM INTO!
FORGET IT, BELLMAN! LET'S SEE WHAT WE CAN SALVAGE FROM THE WRECKAGE...

TWO HOURS LATER, KREEGER AND BELLMAN TOOK INVENTORY...

WE'VE GOT TWO MONTH'S SUPPLY OF FOOD, ONE URANIUM-DESTROYER, AND ABOUT SEVENTY-FIVE TONS OF SCRAP METAL!
LISTEN, COMMANDER! DID YOU HEAR THAT?
5

SOMETHING WAS MOVING TOWARD THEM THROUGH THE DENSE OVERGROWTH! COMMANDER KREEGER LIFTED THE URANIUM-DESTROYER! SUDDENLY IT BURST INTO THE CLEARING...
GOOD LORD! SOME SORT OF ALIEN ANIMAL!
IT SEES US! IT'S ATTACKING!

THE HIDEOUS THING WAS SMALL...SLIGHTLY SMALLER THAN THE TWO MEN! IT SPRANG AT THEM...DROOLING.
KILL IT! KILL IT!
HERE GOES...


THE BLAST FROM KREEGER'S URANIUM-DESTROYER DISSOLVED THE CREATURE'S DISGUSTING HEAD FROM ITS BODY, AND IT FELL AT THE SPACE CAST-AWAYS' FEET... QUIVERING...
OUGH! HOW UGLY!
I WONDER IF THERE'S ANY MORE OF THEM AROUND!

THE TWO MEN LISTENED FOR A FEW MOMENTS! THERE WERE NO SOUNDS! THEN...
HAVE YOU NOTICED ANYTHING, BELLMAN? ANYTHING STRANGE?
N-NO, SIR! WHAT'S UP?

I HAVEN'T NOTICED ANY INSECT LIFE, BELLMAN! NOT A SINGLE BUG!
YOU SURE, SIR? WAIT! I'LL LOOK!

BELLMAN LIFTED UP A LARGE ROCK AND PEERED BELOW ITS DAMP UNDERSIDE...
YOU'RE RIGHT, SIR! DO YOU SUPPOSE INSECT LIFE NEVER DEVELOPED ON THIS PLANET?
LOOKS THAT WAY, DOESN'T IT?

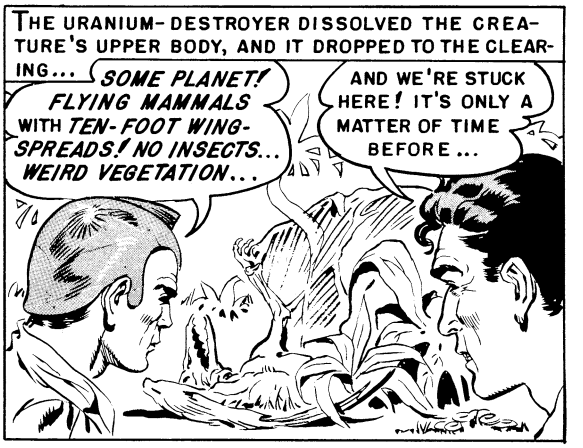
LUCKY FOR LARSON HE'S DEAD! HE WOULD HAVE MISSED THEM!
OH, SHUT UP, BELLMAN! I DON'T THINK YOU'RE FUNNY!
6

HAH! WHAT'S WITH *YOU?* I THOUGHT *BUGS* GAVE YOU THE *SHIVERS!* DIDN'T YOU MENTION SOMETHING ABOUT A *RESTAURANT...!*
OH, YES! I WAS HAVING A MEAL IN A *SWANKY CLUB* ONE EVENING! THE WAITER...

WHAT'S *THAT?* SOUNDS LIKE A *FLAPPING NOISE!*
LOOK! UP THERE! SOME SORT OF *FLYING MAMMAL!* IT... IT *SEES* US!

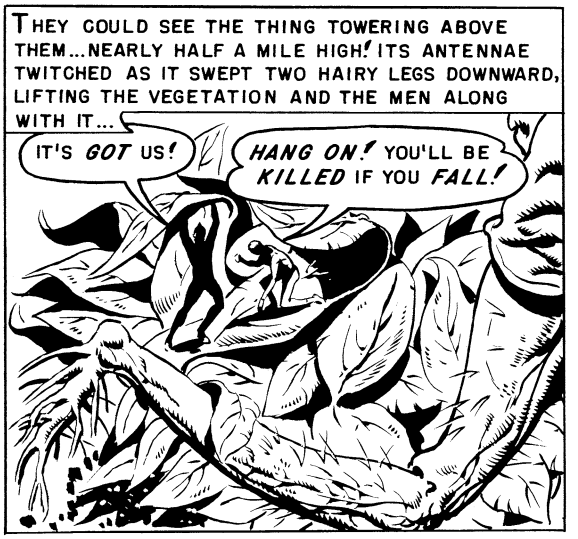
IT'S *DIVING!* *BLAST* IT, KREEGER! *BLAST IT!*
WAIT TILL IT GETS IN *RANGE*..

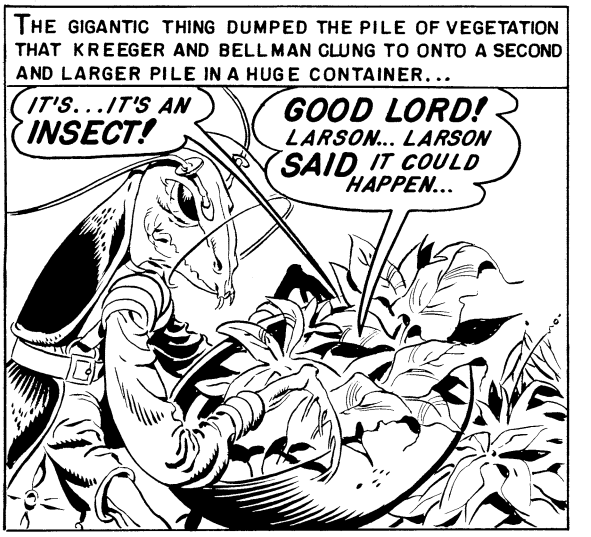
THE WINGED ANIMAL STREAKED DOWN AT THE COWERING MEN... ITS TEETH BARED! IT LOOKED SOMEWHAT LIKE A GIANT BAT! ITS BODY WAS ABOUT SIX FEET LONG! IT SCREAMED AS IT DOVE...
NOW... *NOW!*


THE URANIUM-DESTROYER DISSOLVED THE CREATURE'S UPPER BODY, AND IT DROPPED TO THE CLEARING...
SOME PLANET! FLYING MAMMALS WITH *TEN-FOOT WINGSPREADS! NO INSECTS... WEIRD VEGETATION...*
AND WE'RE STUCK HERE! IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE...

SUDDENLY, THE GROUND TREMBLED...
SOMETHING'S *COMING...*
SOMETHING *BIG...*

THE GROUND TREMBLED AGAIN...
MAKE FOR THE UNDERBRUSH!
RIGHT! I...I... *GOOD LORD!*
7

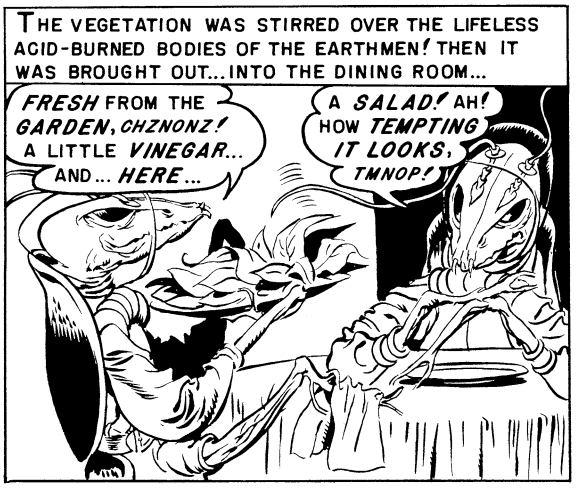

THEY COULD SEE THE THING TOWERING ABOVE THEM...NEARLY HALF A MILE HIGH! ITS ANTENNAE TWITCHED AS IT SWEPT TWO HAIRY LEGS DOWNWARD, LIFTING THE VEGETATION AND THE MEN ALONG WITH IT...
IT'S GOT US!
HANG ON! YOU'LL BE KILLED IF YOU FALL!

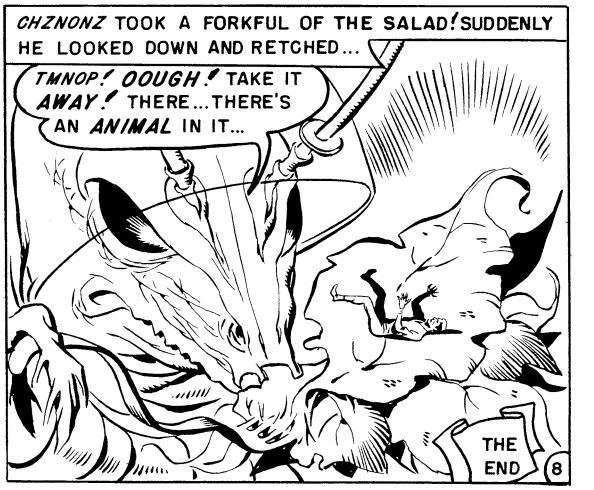

THE GIGANTIC THING DUMPED THE PILE OF VEGETATION THAT KREEGER AND BELLMAN CLUNG TO ONTO A SECOND AND LARGER PILE IN A HUGE CONTAINER...
IT'S...IT'S AN INSECT!
GOOD LORD! LARSON... LARSON SAID IT COULD HAPPEN...

THE TOWERING INSECT MOVED INTO AN IMMENSE STRUCTURE...
WHAT...WHAT COULD HAPPEN?
INSECTS COULD DEVELOP...BECOME THE MASTERS OF A PLANET...

KREEGER AND BELLMAN WERE EMPTIED, ALONG WITH THE VEGETATION, ONTO A DISC-SHAPED PLATFORM...
WHAT IS IT GOING TO DO TO US?
REMEMBER I TOLD YOU ABOUT THE RESTAURANT? I...I ORDERED A SALAD...

THE ACID BURNED AS IT SHOWERED DOWN UPON THE MEN...
YAAAAAAAAHH!
I...GASP... I...FOUND... A...GASP... DEAD ROACH... IN...IT...


THE VEGETATION WAS STIRRED OVER THE LIFELESS ACID-BURNED BODIES OF THE EARTHMEN! THEN IT WAS BROUGHT OUT...INTO THE DINING ROOM...
FRESH FROM THE GARDEN, CHZNONZ! A LITTLE VINEGAR... AND... HERE...
A SALAD! AH! HOW TEMPTING IT LOOKS, TMNOP!


CHZNONZ TOOK A FORKFUL OF THE SALAD! SUDDENLY HE LOOKED DOWN AND RETCHED...
TMNOP! OOUGH! TAKE IT AWAY! THERE...THERE'S AN ANIMAL IN IT...
THE END
8

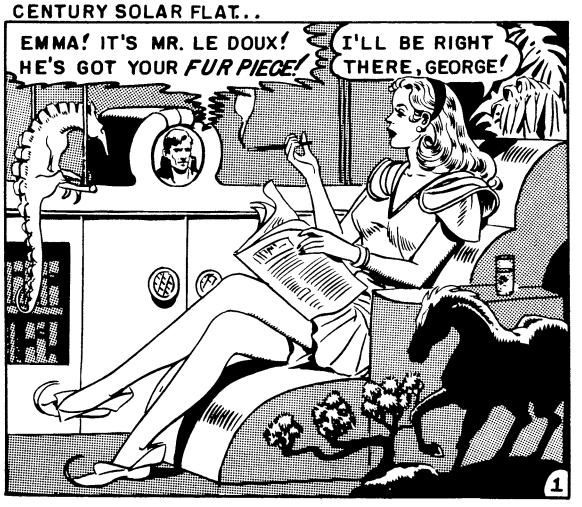
HERE IS A SCIENCE-FICTION YARN WITH SHEER, STARK TERROR IN ITS ELECTRIFYING FINISH!

WHAT FUR?!

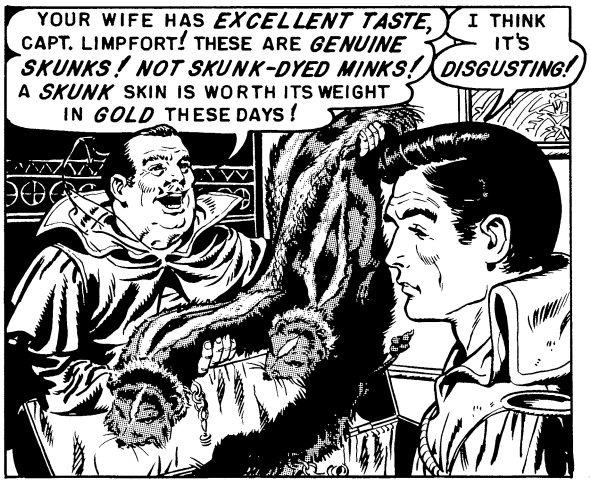
A SCIENCE-FICTION SUSPENSTORY

THE AERO-CAB DROPPED EMILE ON THE BUILDING ROOF, AND HE TOOK THE HYDROLIFT DOWN TO THE SIXTY-NINTH LEVEL! A TALL MAN OPENED THE SOLAR-APARTMENT DOOR...

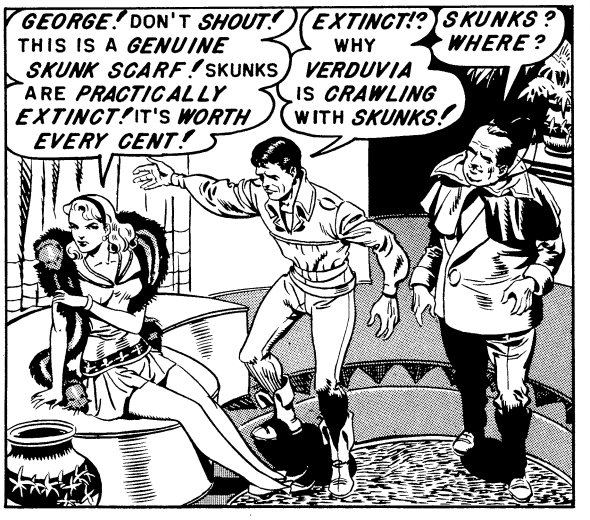
CAPTAIN LIMPFORT STEPPED ASIDE, AND EMILE ENTERED THE LAVISHLY FURNISHED TWENTY-SECOND CENTURY SOLAR FLAT..



EMILE OPENED THE BOX HE'D BEEN CARRYING AND LIFTED OUT THE EXPENSIVE SCARF...


YOUR WIFE HAS *EXCELLENT TASTE*, CAPT. LIMPFORT! THESE ARE *GENUINE SKUNKS! NOT SKUNK-DYED MINKS!* A *SKUNK* SKIN IS WORTH ITS WEIGHT IN *GOLD* THESE DAYS!
I THINK IT'S *DISGUSTING!*

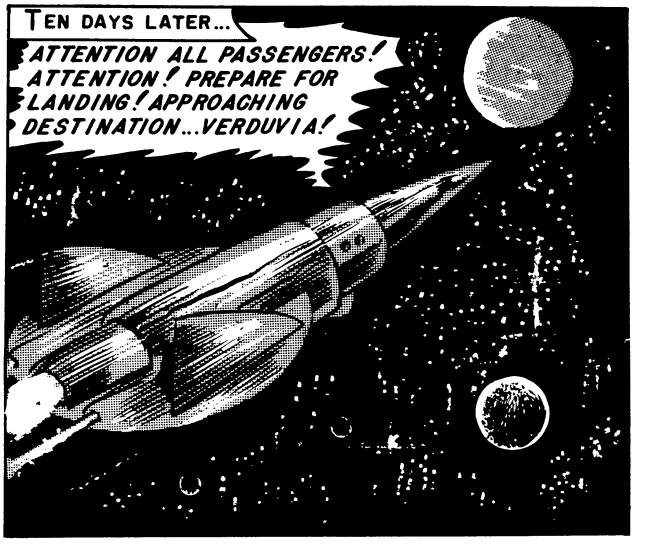
THIS FUR SCARF?!
THE *WHOLE IDEA*...FUR *COATS*... FUR *SCARFS*...*STOLES*...*CAPES*! IT'S *NAUSEATING!* YOU *TRAP* SOME *HELPLESS* ANIMAL...*SKIN* IT...AND *DRAPE* IT AROUND A WOMAN'S NECK...


GEORGE! DON'T *SHOUT!* THIS IS A *GENUINE SKUNK SCARF!* SKUNKS ARE *PRACTICALLY EXTINCT!* IT'S *WORTH EVERY CENT!*
EXTINCT!? WHY *VERDUVIA* IS *CRAWLING* WITH *SKUNKS!*
SKUNKS? WHERE?

VERDUVIA! IT'S A LITTLE PLANET IN SOLAR SYSTEM E-105! I MADE AN *EMERGENCY LANDING* THERE ONCE! IT'S NEVER BEEN *EXPLORED!* I GUESS I'M THE ONLY HUMAN THAT *EVER SET FOOT ON IT!* I *NAMED* 'ER!
ARE YOU SURE THEY WERE *SKUNKS?*
2

I KNOW A SKUNK WHEN I SMELL ONE, LE DOUX! THESE ANIMALS WERE SKUNKS!
IF WHAT YOU SAY IS TRUE, CAPT. LIMPFORT...
...I COULD MAKE YOU VERY RICH!
WHAT? GO UP THERE AND TRAP THOSE LITTLE THINGS...
EXACTLY! IF THEY ARE SKUNKS, THEIR PELTS ARE VERY VALUABLE!
THEY ARE... AND I'M AGAINST IT! IT'S CRUEL! POOR THINGS!
LOOK AT THEM... LAID END TO END...LIKE SOME GORY CHAIN HANGING AROUND HER NECK!
GEORGE!
YOU NEED ONLY TAKE ME THERE, LIMPFORT! YOU NEEDN'T TRAP AND SKIN THEM!
I'D BE A PARTY TO IT!
I'LL PAY YOU FOR TRANSPORTING ME! TAKE ME TO VERDUVIA... THAT'S ALL I ASK! I'LL MAKE IT WORTH YOUR WHILE!
THE COST OF CHARTERING MY ROCKET SHIP AND CREW WILL BE $4000 PER DAY! VERDUVIA IS A TEN-DAY JOURNEY EACH WAY!
YOU'RE HIRED, CAPTAIN... YOU AND YOUR SHIP... AND ITS CREW!
REMEMBER, LE DOUX...YOUR BUSINESS ON VERDUVIA IS YOUR OWN CONCERN! I AM AGAINST THE EVIL PRACTICE YOU INDULGE IN! I AM A ROCKET TRANSPORTER! NOTHING MORE...
I WILL REMEMBER, CAPT. LIMPFORT! WHEN DO WE LEAVE?
3

CAPTAIN LIMPFORT'S ROCKET SHIP LEFT EARTH TWO DAYS LATER, BOUND FOR VERDUVIA...



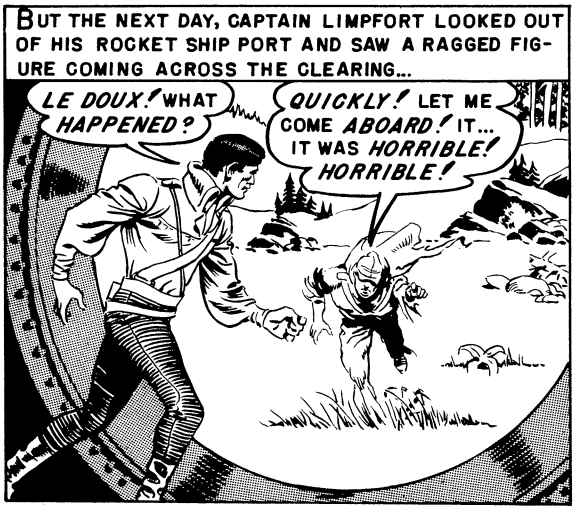
AND THEN THE SHIP WAS DOWN...

ALL RIGHT, LE DOUX! YOU CAN EITHER OPERATE *FROM* THE SHIP OR *MAKE CAMP* WHERE YOU *SEE FIT!*
SINCE YOU *DISAPPROVE* OF WHAT WE ARE *HERE* FOR, CAPTAIN, WE'LL MAKE OUR *OWN* CAMP!

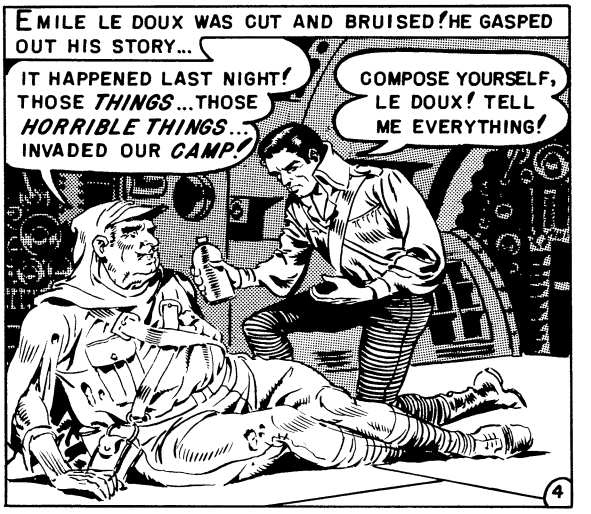
EMILE LE DOUX AND HIS ASSOCIATES SET OFF ABOUT THEIR BUSINESS...

THE SKUNK TRAPPING BEGAN IN EARNEST...

BUT THE NEXT DAY, CAPTAIN LIMPFORT LOOKED OUT OF HIS ROCKET SHIP PORT AND SAW A RAGGED FIGURE COMING ACROSS THE CLEARING...



EMILE LE DOUX WAS CUT AND BRUISED! HE GASPED OUT HIS STORY...


IT HAPPENED LAST NIGHT! THOSE *THINGS*...THOSE *HORRIBLE THINGS*... INVADED OUR *CAMP!*
COMPOSE YOURSELF, LE DOUX! TELL ME EVERYTHING!
4

'WE'D PITCHED CAMP ABOUT FIVE MILES FROM THE SHIP! WE'D HAD A GOOD DAY'S TRAPPING... ALMOST SEVENTY-FIVE PELTS! SUDDENLY, THE GROUND BEGAN TO SHAKE...'
EMILE! FEEL THAT?
SOMETHING'S COMING!
'THEY WERE HUGE... HIDEOUS! HAIRY ALIEN MONSTERS...'
GOOD LORD!
YAAAAAAAAGHHHH!
'THEY STORMED DOWN UPON US! I MANAGED TO HIDE BENEATH AN OVERHANGING ROCK AND SO WASN'T SEEN! THE LOATHSOME THINGS CAPTURED THE OTHERS...'
EEEEEEEE...
AAGGHH!
'AND RIGHT THERE BEFORE MY EYES... MURDERED THEM...'
CHOKE...
IT WAS THE BLOODIEST SIGHT I'VE EVER SEEN, CAPTAIN. I... I'M SICK!
ARE YOU SURE THEY'RE DEAD... ALL OF THEM? THE OTHERS...
ABSOLUTELY! LET'S LEAVE THIS CURSED PLACE!
PREPARE FOR TAKE-OFF! PREPARE FOR TAKE-OFF...
SUDDENLY THE SHIP SHOOK...
WHAT'S THAT?
SOMETHING'S COMING!
5

CAPTAIN LIMPFORT DARTED TO THE PORT...
HOLY SMOKE! LE DOUX! COME QUICKLY!
IT... IT... IT'S THEM!
LOOK... AROUND THEIR NECKS!
GOOD LORD!
WHAT IN BLAZES ARE YOU SHOCKED ABOUT, LE DOUX?
BUT THAT... THAT'S DIFFERENT!
CAPTAIN LIMPFORT SLAMMED THE PORT SHUT! THE ROCKET TUBES BEGAN TO FIRE! THE SHIP BEGAN TO RISE! THE HAIRY MONSTERS HESITATED... WATCHING IT! AROUND THEIR NECKS, THE DEATH-WHITE HUMAN SKINS HUNG LIMPLY... THE ARTIFICIAL EYES STARING...
IS IT DIFFERENT, LE DOUX? THESE FURRY CREATURES WEAR HUMAN PELTS! WE HUMANS WEAR FURS! IS IT DIFFERENT? IS IT?
THE END
6

The PEOPLE'S CHOICE!

SUDDENLY, A HUSH FELL OVER THE CROWDED TELEVISION STUDIO! A TECHNICIAN SCURRIED ABOUT MAKING LAST MINUTE ADJUSTMENTS! THE CAMERAMAN PEERED AT HIS VIEW SCREEN... CHECKING HIS FOCUS! MISS FAN WONDERLAND MOVED TO HER PLACE BEFORE THE GAILY DECORATED MINIATURE STAGE! A POINTY-NOSED, SAD-FACED PUPPET POPPED UP BESIDE HER! A LARGE-JAWED ONE FOLLOWED! THE RED LIGHT OVER THE CAMERA BLINKED ON! AN ANNOUNCER'S VOICE BROKE THE SILENCE...

FOLKS! IT'S THE *CUCKOO, FAN, AND ALLIE SHOW...* WITH *FAN WONDERLAND* AND STARRING *SNAG FILLBRUM'S* LOVABLE PUPPETS, *CUCKOO* AND *ALLIE*...
TV
Joe Orlando

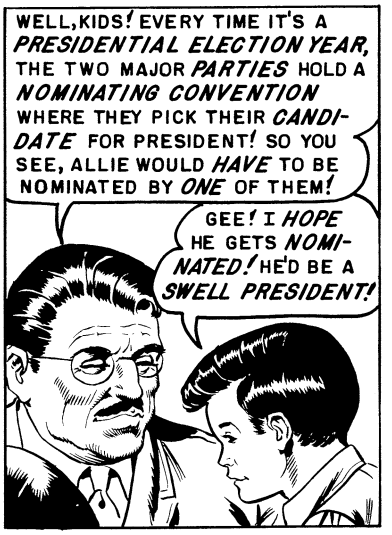
OUT ACROSS THE NATION, MILLIONS OF SET OWNERS...YOUNG AND OLD...SAT BACK TO WATCH ONE OF THE MOST POPULAR PROGRAMS ON T.V...

DADDY! DID YOU *HEAR* THAT? *ALLIE GATOR* IS RUNNING FOR *PRESIDENT!*
HEH, HEH! PRETTY CLEVER *PUBLICITY STUNT*, EH, MYRA?
SH-H-H, SAM! LET'S *LISTEN!* I *ADORE* THIS SHOW!

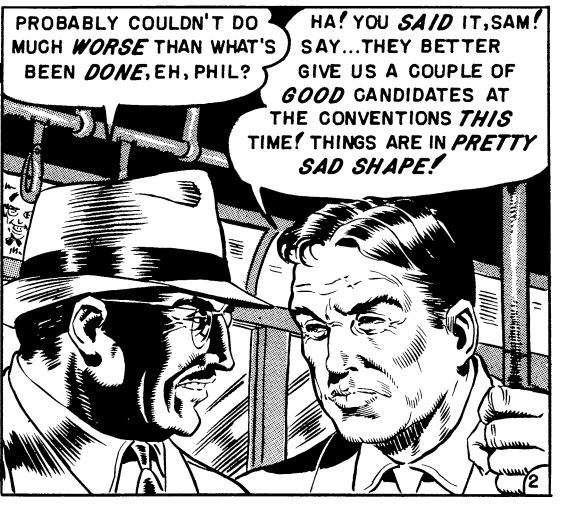
EVERYONE ADORED THE *CUCKOO, FAN,* AND *ALLIE* SHOW! SHY, ADORABLE *CUCKOO*... MISCHIEVOUS, LOVABLE *ALLIE*... AND PRETTY, UNDERSTANDING *FAN* HAD CAPTURED THE NATION'S HEART! NIGHTLY, THEY CAVORTED ON HUNDREDS OF T.V. SCREENS...

SHUCKS, FAN! *EVERYBODY'S* DOIN' IT! WHY CAN'T *ALLIE?* I MEAN RUN FOR *PRESIDENT,* THAT IS!
I GUESS HE *CAN* IF HE *WANTS* TO, CUCKOO!
ALEXANDER K. GATOR... FOR *PRESIDENT!* TELL YOUR *FRIENDS!*

COULD HE *DO* IT, DADDY? COULD ALLIE GET *ELECTED PRESIDENT?*
IT'D BE PRETTY *TOUGH*, SON! HE'D HAVE TO CAPTURE THE *CONVENTION!*
CONVENTION, DADDY? WHAT'S *THAT?*


WELL, KIDS! EVERY TIME IT'S A *PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION YEAR,* THE TWO MAJOR *PARTIES* HOLD A *NOMINATING CONVENTION* WHERE THEY PICK THEIR *CANDIDATE* FOR PRESIDENT! SO YOU SEE, ALLIE WOULD *HAVE* TO BE NOMINATED BY *ONE* OF THEM!
GEE! I *HOPE* HE GETS *NOMINATED!* HE'D BE A *SWELL PRESIDENT!*

THE NEXT DAY... ON A CROWDED BUS...
HEH, HEH! DID YOU CATCH THAT *KID SHOW* ON T.V. LAST NIGHT, PHIL?
YEAH! *CUTE*, HUH? THAT LITTLE *ALLIGATOR'S* RUNNIN' FOR *PRESIDENT!*


PROBABLY COULDN'T DO MUCH *WORSE* THAN WHAT'S BEEN *DONE*, EH, PHIL?
HA! YOU *SAID* IT, SAM! SAY... THEY BETTER GIVE US A COUPLE OF *GOOD* CANDIDATES AT THE CONVENTIONS *THIS* TIME! THINGS ARE IN *PRETTY SAD SHAPE!*

BUT AT THE NATIONAL POLITICAL CONVENTIONS LAST JULY... WELL, YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENED...
THE WISCONSIN DELEGATION IS GOING *WILD* FOLKS! IT LOOKS LIKE *THIS MAY DO IT!*
TSFOR
PRESIDENT
A TRIED AND TRUE SERVANT OF THE PEOPLE
THE CANDIDATES WERE PICKED! SOMEWHERE IN THE COUNTRY, TWO DISAPPOINTED CHILDREN QUESTIONED THEIR FATHER...
ALLIE *WASN'T NOMINATED, WAS* HE, DADDY?
HMMPH! NO! BUT HE MIGHT AS *WELL* HAVE BEEN!
DON'T YOU *LIKE* WHO THEY NOMINATED, DADDY?
NOPE! YOU MEAN EVEN IF YOU *WANTED* TO, YOU COULDN'T *VOTE* FOR ALLIE?
WELL, I GUESS I *COULD* VOTE FOR HIM ON A *WRITE-IN*... IF I *WANTED* TO!
WHY *DON'T* YOU, DADDY? WHY *DON'T* YOU?
YOU *SAID* YOU DIDN'T *LIKE* WHO THEY *NOMINATED!* WHY DON'T YOU *WRITE-IN-VOTE FOR ALLIE*, DADDY?
THE NEXT DAY... ON A CROWDED BUS...
WHAT'DYA THINK OF THE *CONVENTIONS, PHIL?*
I'M *DISGUSTED*, SAM! I DON'T KNOW *WHO* TO VOTE FOR! YOU'D THINK THERE WASN'T ANYBODY *GOOD* AROUND THESE DAYS...
I KNOW WHAT *I'M* DOIN', PHIL! MY *KIDS* GAVE ME THE IDEA LAST NIGHT! YOU KNOW THAT *KID SHOW*... *CUCKOO, SOMETHIN'?*
YOU MEAN...
KEEP MOVING
HAVE YOU B.O.
ALEXANDER K. GATOR... FOR *PRESIDENT!* I'M CASTING A *WRITE-IN VOTE*... AS A *PROTEST!*
WOW! WHAT A *LAUGH!* THAT'S A *SWELL* IDEA! *I'LL* DO IT, *TOO! THAT'LL* SHOW THOSE POLITICIANS WHAT *WE* THINK OF THEIR CANDIDATES!
3

WORD SPREAD...
I HEARD THESE TWO MEN TALKING ON THE BUS, ETHEL! THEY'RE ACTUALLY GOING TO DO IT!
WRITE-IN-VOTE FOR THAT DARLING LITTLE ALLIGATOR PUPPET? HOW QUAINT!
KNOW WHAT, ETHEL? I'M GOING TO DO IT, TOO!
SO WILL I! HE'S AS GOOD AS ANY!
AND THAT NIGHT...
ETHEL! ARE YOU SERIOUS?
IT'S A PROTEST, HERMAN! WHAT HARM CAN IT DO?
THE NEXT DAY...
HERMAN! ARE YOU SURE YOU FEEL ALL RIGHT?
PERFECTLY, LARRY! IT'S A GAG! A PROTEST VOTE! WHAT HARM CAN IT DO? ALEXANDER K. GATOR... FOR PRESIDENT! WRITE-IN VOTE! I'M DOING IT! MY WIFE GAVE ME THE IDEA!
THAT NIGHT...
HERMAN AND HIS WIFE ARE BOTH GOING TO DO IT, STELLA!
VOTE FOR THAT FUNNY ALLIGATOR PUPPET? IT'S... IT'S CRAZY! IT'S... IT'S... LET'S DO IT, LARRY!
AND ON THOUSANDS OF T.V. SCREENS...
ALLIE'S GETTING LOTS OF MAIL, FAN! EVERYBODY WRITES THAT THEY'RE VOTING FOR HIM FOR PRESIDENT!
IT'S A FREE COUNTRY... I GUESS...
DON'T BE BITTER, FAN! IF I'M ELECTED, YOU CAN BE SECRETARY OF STATE... HAH, HAH...
SERIOUSLY, FOLKS! VOTING IS A PRIVILEGE AND A DUTY OF EVERY CITIZEN! CUCKOO AND ALLIE, HERE, APPRECIATE YOUR KIND OFFERS, BUT...
DON'T LISTEN TO HER, FOLKS! IT'S A FREE COUNTRY!
SURE! YOU VOTE FOR ANYBODY YOU LIKE... EVEN ME!
4

AS ELECTION DAY DREW NEAR...

GET *THIS*, SAM! 'POLLSTERS *REFUSE* TO MAKE A *PREDICTION* ABOUT THE *COMING ELECTION!* TOO MANY PEOPLE INTERVIEWED ARE TAKING IT TOO *LIGHTLY!* EVERYBODY *JOKES* ABOUT IT! A *SAMPLING* OF *OPINION* IS *IMPOSSIBLE* WITH *THIS* GENERAL FEELING!

ONE OF THEM GUYS INTERVIEWED *ME!* I TOLD 'EM I WASN'T CHOOSIN' *ANYBODY* ON THE *BALLOT!* HE LOOKED AT ME *QUEER LIKE* WHEN I TOLD HIM WHAT I *WAS* DOIN'!

DAILY EXPRESS

HAWKERS BEGAN TO APPEAR ON STREET CORNERS...

GET YOUR *GAG BUTTONS*, FOLKS! HERE YOU ARE! *'ALEXANDER K. GATOR FOR PRESIDENT!'* 10¢! RIGHT HERE! *GAG BUTTONS!*

GIVE ME ONE! HEY, LOOEY! WANT ONE?

10¢

DRINK SPA

ALLIE GATOR TIES, FOLKS! RIGHT HERE! *'ALEXANDER K. GATOR FOR PRESIDENT!'* GATOR TIES...

LOOK, MOMMY! *ALLIE'S PICTURE! BUY ME ONE!*

TWO PLEASE! *ONE*... CHUCKLE... FOR MY *HUSBAND!*

ON ELECTION EVE...

I'M FROM *LIVE MAGAZINE*, MR. FILLBRUM! NOW *YOUR PUPPET*...

CAN'T TALK NOW...GOT TO GO *ON* IN ONE MINUTE! SEE ME *LATER*...

THE NEXT DAY... ELECTION DAY...

DID YOU *DO* IT, PHIL?

I *SURE DID*, SAM! I *WROTE IN* THAT *PROTEST* VOTE! I *GAVE* IT TO THAT *DANG PUPPET!*

BOARD OF ELECTION

AND SUDDENLY...ON ELECTION NIGHT... AS THE RETURNS POURED IN...

LISTEN TO THIS, FOLKS... AND *LISTEN CAREFULLY!* THE *STATE OF NEW YORK* HAS BEEN *CARRIED*... ON *WRITE-IN VOTES*... BY *ALEXANDER K. GATOR!*

FLASH! MAINE GOES GATOR!

A.K.GATOR

BY MORNING IT WAS CLEAR! *VERY CLEAR*...

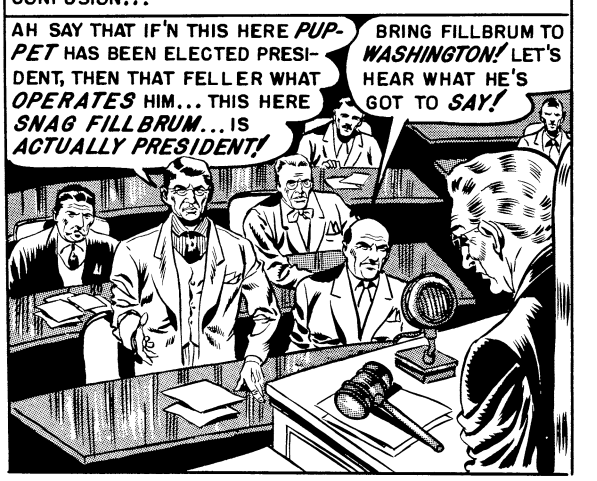
WITH ONLY A FEW SCATTERED OUTLYING DISTRICTS YET TO REPORT... WE CAN DEFINITELY CONCLUDE THAT *ALEXANDER K. GATOR HAS BEEN ELECTED*

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES!

5

THE NEXT DAY, NEWSPAPERS BLASTED FORTH WITH SCREAMING HEADLINES...

THE FLOOR OF CONGRESS WAS A SCENE OF UTTER CONFUSION...


AH SAY THAT IF'N THIS HERE PUPPET HAS BEEN ELECTED PRESIDENT, THEN THAT FELLER WHAT OPERATES HIM... THIS HERE SNAG FILLBRUM... IS ACTUALLY PRESIDENT!
BRING FILLBRUM TO WASHINGTON! LET'S HEAR WHAT HE'S GOT TO SAY!

SNAG FILLBRUM, CREATOR OF CUCKOO AND ALLIE, WAS SUMMONED BEFORE A JOINT SESSION OF CONGRESS...

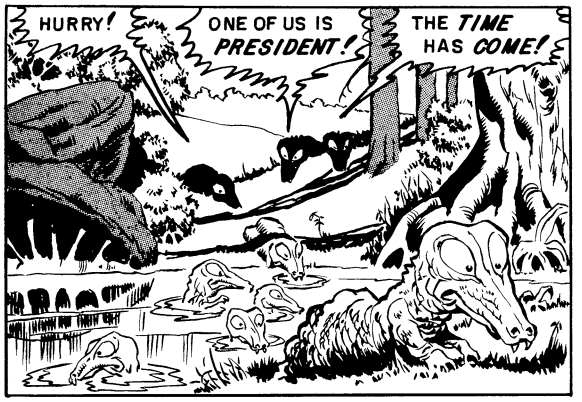
IS THIS YOUR PUPPET, MR. FILLBRUM... THE ONE THAT'S BEEN ELECTED?
THIS IS ALLIE, SENATOR!
LOOK HERE, FILLBRUM! YOU'LL ADMIT THIS HAS BEEN A TRAGIC MISTAKE...

NOT AT ALL SENATOR! ALLIE WAS ELECTED FAIR AND SQUARE!
OF COURSE! BUT... WELL, A PUPPET... AS PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES? COME NOW!
AFTER ALL, FILLBRUM... YOU ARE HIS VOICE... HIS MOVEMENTS...

YOU MEAN THAT AN *ALIEN* FROM *OUTER SPACE* HAS BEEN *ELECTED PRESIDENT* OF THE *UNITED STATES*?
THIS *NONSENSE* HAS GONE *FAR ENOUGH*, FILLBRUM! I'M GOING TO VOTE TO *CITE* YOU FOR *CONTEMPT*!

ALLIE, WHO HAD BEEN SILENT ALL THIS TIME, SUDDENLY STIRRED! SNAG FILLBRUM FROZE... LIKE A WAX STATUE...
MR. FILLBRUM HAS BEEN TELLING YOU THE *TRUTH*, GENTLEMEN!
GOOD LORD! HE... HE *SPEAKS*!

AT THAT MOMENT, FROM THE SWAMPS AND BOGS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY...FROM THEIR HIDING PLACES OF MANY YEARS...MILLIONS OF CREATURES LIKE ALLIE K. GATOR CRAWLED...



IMPEACHMENT PROCEEDINGS AGAINST ALEXANDER K. GATOR WERE BEGUN! BUT BY THAT TIME, THE INVASION WAS WELL UNDER WAY...

AND ON THE FLOOR OF CONGRESS, HUNDREDS OF ALIEN-INHABITED HANDS ROSE IN VOTE...

ALL THOSE IN FAVOR OF *DISMISSING* THE *IMPEACHMENT INDICTMENT* AGAINST *A.K. GATOR* AND ALLOWING HIM TO *TAKE OFFICE* AS OUR DULY ELECTED *PRESIDENT*, SIGNIFY BY RAISING YOUR *HAND* AND SAYING '*AYE*'!
AYE... *AYE*... *AYE*... *AYE*... *AYE*...
THE END

MASS MEETING!

THE '*URANIUM MINING COMPANY'S*' MARTIAN REFINERIES LAY LIKE SOME PETRIFIED MONSTER OVER THE ARID RED-SAND WASTES! THEIR TOWERING STAINLESS-STEEL CHIMNEYS POINTED SKYWARD, GAPING AND SMOKELESS! A DEATHLY SILENCE HUNG OVER EVERYTHING! SOMEWHERE A FAINT BREEZE STIRRED, KICKING UP THE CURSED RED DUST AND DRIFTING IT AGAINST THE DESERTED REFINERY BUILDINGS! ON A RED ROCK CREST OVERLOOKING THE SPRAWLING PLANTS, TWO MEN ARGUED...

I SAY WE *DISASSEMBLE* THE WHOLE BLASTED OPERATION AND SHIP IT *BACK TO EARTH!* THERE ISN'T ANOTHER OUNCE OF URANIUM ORE *LEFT* ON THIS BLASTED DESERT PLANET!
FOR *WHAT?* THERE ISN'T ANY URANIUM ORE ON *EARTH* TO REFINE *EITHER!* *NO!* *THAT* WOULDN'T *SOLVE* ANYTHING!
Joe Orlando

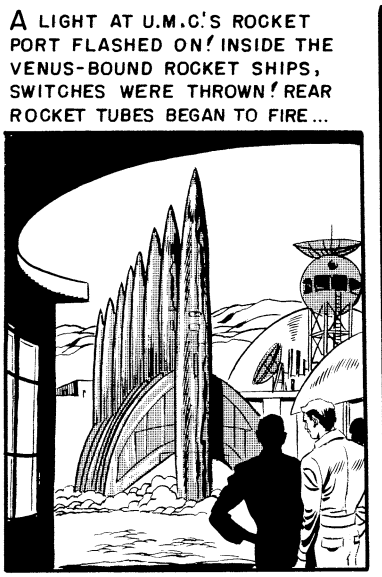
ANTHONY W. BRISBANE, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF 'URANIUM MINING COMPANY,' STROKED HIS CHIN THOUGHTFULLY...

YOU'RE RIGHT, FRED! WE'VE *GOT* TO FIND A *NEW* SOURCE OF SUPPLY! HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF ATOMIC ENGINES BACK ON EARTH WILL *STOP* AS SOON AS THE *STOCK-PILES* OF URANIUM ARE *GONE!*
WHAT ABOUT *VENUS*, TONY? WE *KNOW* THERE'S URANIUM ORE *THERE!*

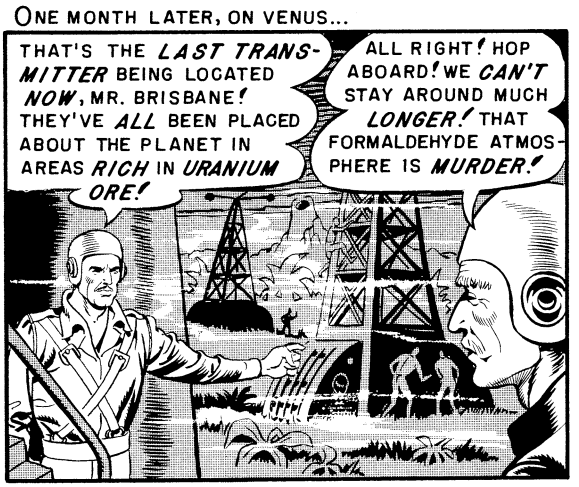
HOW COULD WE POSSIBLY REFINE IT, FRED? AT LEAST ON MARS, THERE'S A BREATHABLE ATMOSPHERE! VENUS IS SURROUNDED WITH A LAYER OF FORMALDEHYDE GAS!
COULDN'T WE MINE IT AND SHIP IT HERE TO BE REFINED?
WE'D NEED TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND TONS OF VENUS'S URANIUM ORE TO MAKE ONE OUNCE OF PURE FISSIONABLE U-235! DO YOU REALIZE HOW MANY SHIPLOADS THAT WOULD BE? THAT'S OUT OF THE QUESTION!
WELL, WHY NOT REFINE IT THERE? BUILD A PLANT...
`FISSIONABLE PRODUCTS COMPANY' TRIED IT, FRED! TEN YEARS AGO! THE FOUNDATION OF THE PLANT IS STILL THERE! THEY HAD TO GIVE UP! THE FORMALDEHYDE ATMOSPHERE WAS TOO MUCH! A SHIP COULDN'T STAY THERE FOR MORE THAN ONE WEEK! THE WORKMEN COULDN'T REMAIN OUTSIDE THE SHIP FOR MORE THAN TWO HOURS!
FAILED, EH?
DISMAL FAILURE, FRED! AND EVEN IF THEY WOULD'VE BUILT THE PLANT, I DOUBT IF THEY'D HAVE GOTTEN PEOPLE TO WORK IT!
I SUPPOSE YOU'RE RIGHT, TONY! IF ONLY THERE WERE A WAY TO TRANSPORT VENUS'S ORE HERE CHEAPLY!
FREDDY! YOU'VE GOT IT! YOU JUST HIT IT! NOT TRANSPORT! TELEPORT!
TELEPORT! WHAT'S TELEPORT?
TELEPORTATION! IT'S A METHOD OF TRANSMITTING MATTER OVER GREAT DISTANCES BY MICROWAVE RADIO SIGNALS!
TRANSMITTING MATTER... BY RADIO! SAY! THIS MARTIAN HEAT MUST BE GETTING YOU! LET'S GET INDOORS!
IT'S A FACT, FREDDY! IT CAN BE DONE! CARL-WEISS, IN OUR EARTH LABORATORIES, IS PERFECTING THE MACHINES NOW! I SAW IT DEMONSTRATED! IT WORKS... ACTUALLY WORKS!
2

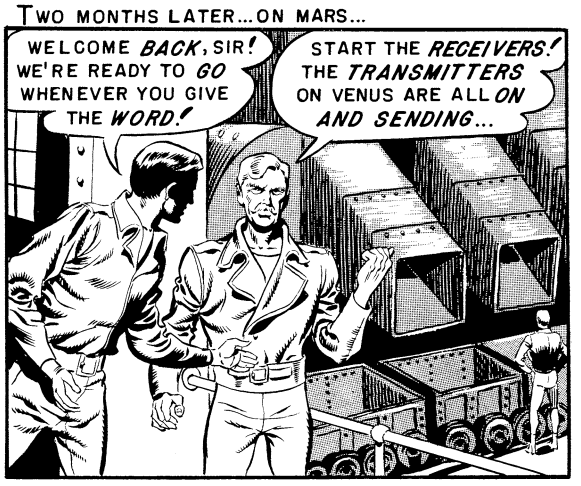
HOW? HOW DOES IT WORK?
ONE MACHINE BREAKS DOWN MATTER INTO ENERGY..CONVERTS THE ENERGY INTO MICROWAVE IMPULSES... AND TRANSMITS THESE IMPULSES!
THE TELEPORTATION RECEIVER REVERSES THE PROCESS... PICKING UP THESE IMPULSES... CONVERTING THEM BACK INTO ENERGY... AND CONVERTING THE ENERGY BACK INTO MATTER!
THEN YOU'RE TRYING TO SAY THAT...
WE CAN TELEPORT VENUS'S URANIUM ORE DIRECTLY TO EARTH...
THAT WOULD BE A MISTAKE, TONY! WHY NOT KEEP THIS IDEA A SECRET? TELEPORT VENUS'S URANIUM ORE HERE! WE'LL REFINE IT AND SEND THE U-235 TO EARTH AS WE HAVE BEEN DOING!
YOU'RE RIGHT, FRED! IN THAT WAY OUR COMPETITORS WILL THINK WE'RE STILL MINING THE STUFF HERE!
WE'LL TELL 'EM WE HIT A NEW VEIN... HEH, HEH... A RICH ONE!
NO ONE WILL BE THE WISER, AND WE'LL HAVE VENUS'S VAST URANIUM WEALTH FOR OURSELVES! C'MON! LET'S WORK THIS OUT!
AND SO, TONY BRISBANE PLACED ALL OF THE RESOURCES OF URANIUM MINING COMPANY BEHIND THE TELEPORTATION SCHEME! MEANWHILE, EARTH'S URANIUM STOCKPILE WAS DWINDLING TO AN ALARMING POINT...
ALL EFFORTS TO LOCATE NEW URANIUM ORE DEPOSITS HAVE FAILED! TINY AMOUNTS HAVE BEEN TRICKLING IN FROM VENUS WHERE HARDY MINERS HAVE VENTURED! BUT BECAUSE OF THE FORMALDEHYDE ATMOSPHERE, A LARGE SCALE OPERATION IS IMPOSSIBLE!
HEH, HEH! I HEAR THAT, CARLWEISS?
I HEAR IT, MR. BRISBANE!
WHAT'S THE LATEST REPORT ON THE TELEPORTATION MACHINES, CARLWEISS?
WE HAVE EIGHT HUNDRED PAIRS OF TRANSMITTERS AND RECEIVERS READY TO BE PUT INTO OPERATION, MR. BRISBANE!
3

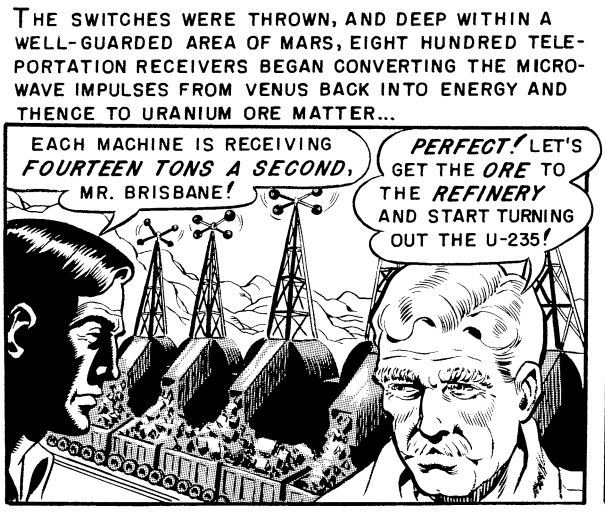
FINALLY...
THE RECEIVERS HAVE BEEN SHIPPED TO OUR MARTIAN REFINERY, SIR! THE TRANSMITTERS ARE ABOARD THE VENUS-BOUND SHIPS NOW!
GOOD! OPERATION TELEPORTATION IS READY TO GO! GIVE THE SIGNAL!


A LIGHT AT U.M.C.'S ROCKET PORT FLASHED ON! INSIDE THE VENUS-BOUND ROCKET SHIPS, SWITCHES WERE THROWN! REAR ROCKET TUBES BEGAN TO FIRE...

...AND THE TRANSMITTER-PACKED SHIPS HURTLED INTO SPACE...

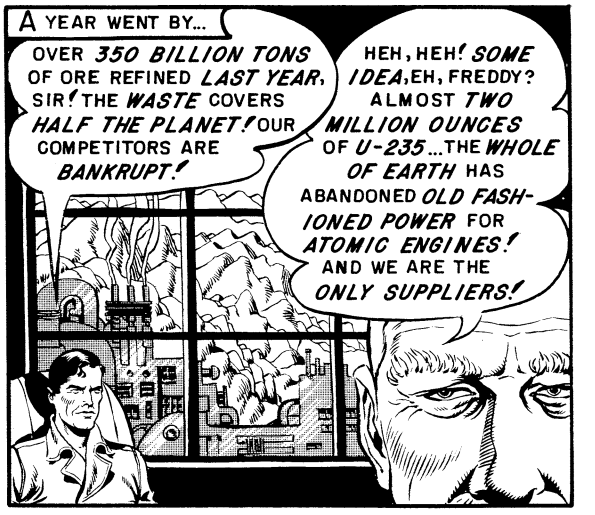

ONE MONTH LATER, ON VENUS...
THAT'S THE LAST TRANSMITTER BEING LOCATED NOW, MR. BRISBANE! THEY'VE ALL BEEN PLACED ABOUT THE PLANET IN AREAS RICH IN URANIUM ORE!
ALL RIGHT! HOP ABOARD! WE CAN'T STAY AROUND MUCH LONGER! THAT FORMALDEHYDE ATMOSPHERE IS MURDER!

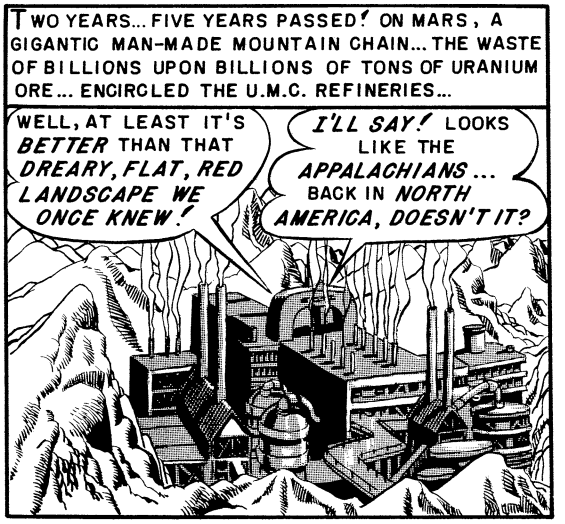

TWO MONTHS LATER...ON MARS...
WELCOME BACK, SIR! WE'RE READY TO GO WHENEVER YOU GIVE THE WORD!
START THE RECEIVERS! THE TRANSMITTERS ON VENUS ARE ALL ON AND SENDING...

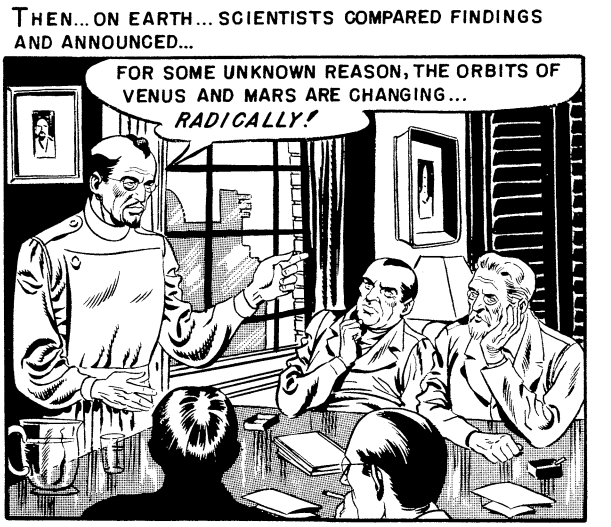

THE SWITCHES WERE THROWN, AND DEEP WITHIN A WELL-GUARDED AREA OF MARS, EIGHT HUNDRED TELEPORTATION RECEIVERS BEGAN CONVERTING THE MICROWAVE IMPULSES FROM VENUS BACK INTO ENERGY AND THENCE TO URANIUM ORE MATTER...
EACH MACHINE IS RECEIVING FOURTEEN TONS A SECOND, MR. BRISBANE!
PERFECT! LET'S GET THE ORE TO THE REFINERY AND START TURNING OUT THE U-235!

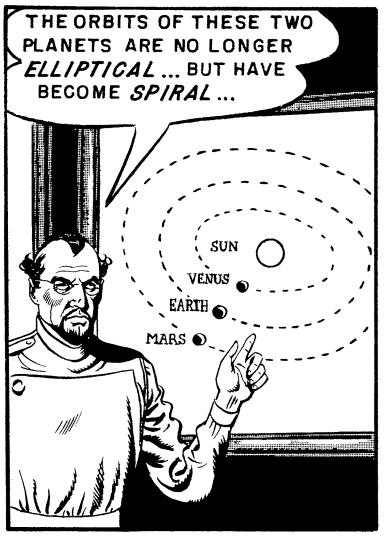
AND SO, ONCE AGAIN, SMOKE POURED FROM THE STAINLESS STEEL STACKS OF THE U.M.C.'S MARTIAN REFINERIES...
WE'RE BRINGING IN ABOUT ONE BILLION TONS OF ORE A DAY, SIR!
HMMM! THAT MEANS WE'RE TURNING OUT ABOUT FIVE THOUSAND OUNCES OF U-235 PER DAY! GOOD! THAT'S BETTER THAN WHEN WE MINED IT HERE!
4

AND SO, THE FLOW OF U-235 TO EARTH BEGAN ANEW... 'URANIUM MINING COMPANY'S' MARTIAN REFINERIES HAVE SOLVED THE TEMPORARY SHORTAGE OF U-235, FOLKS! WE'RE GETTING ABOUT FIVE THOUSAND OUNCES A DAY! ATOMIC ENGINE PRODUCERS ARE STARTING TO MANUFACTURE ONCE MORE! LOOKS LIKE U.M.C.'S NEW STRIKE IS A BONANZA...

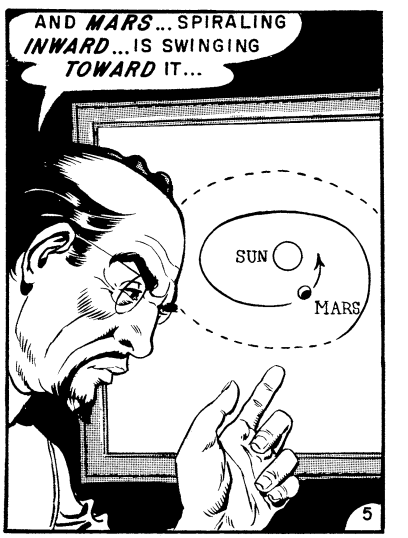

A YEAR WENT BY...
OVER 350 BILLION TONS OF ORE REFINED LAST YEAR, SIR! THE WASTE COVERS HALF THE PLANET! OUR COMPETITORS ARE BANKRUPT!
HEH, HEH! SOME IDEA, EH, FREDDY? ALMOST TWO MILLION OUNCES OF U-235... THE WHOLE OF EARTH HAS ABANDONED OLD FASHIONED POWER FOR ATOMIC ENGINES! AND WE ARE THE ONLY SUPPLIERS!


TWO YEARS... FIVE YEARS PASSED! ON MARS, A GIGANTIC MAN-MADE MOUNTAIN CHAIN... THE WASTE OF BILLIONS UPON BILLIONS OF TONS OF URANIUM ORE... ENCIRCLED THE U.M.C. REFINERIES...
WELL, AT LEAST IT'S BETTER THAN THAT DREARY, FLAT, RED LANDSCAPE WE ONCE KNEW!
I'LL SAY! LOOKS LIKE THE APPALACHIANS... BACK IN NORTH AMERICA, DOESN'T IT?


THEN... ON EARTH... SCIENTISTS COMPARED FINDINGS AND ANNOUNCED...
FOR SOME UNKNOWN REASON, THE ORBITS OF VENUS AND MARS ARE CHANGING... RADICALLY!


THE ORBITS OF THESE TWO PLANETS ARE NO LONGER ELLIPTICAL... BUT HAVE BECOME SPIRAL...
SUN
VENUS
EARTH
MARS

VENUS... FOLLOWING A SPIRAL PATH... IS SWINGING OUTWARD FROM THE SUN...
SUN
VENUS

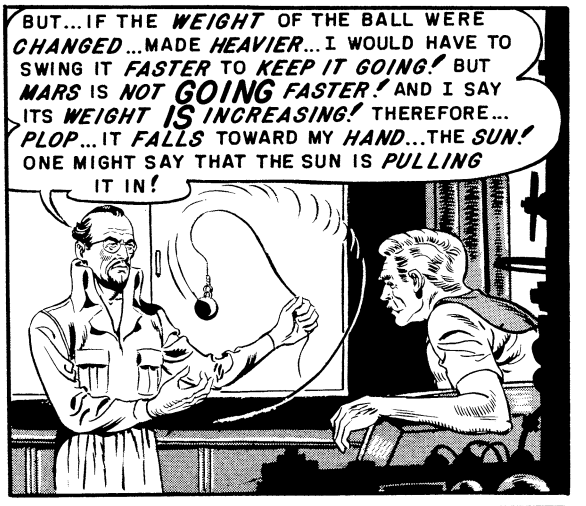

AND MARS... SPIRALING INWARD... IS SWINGING TOWARD IT...
SUN
MARS
5

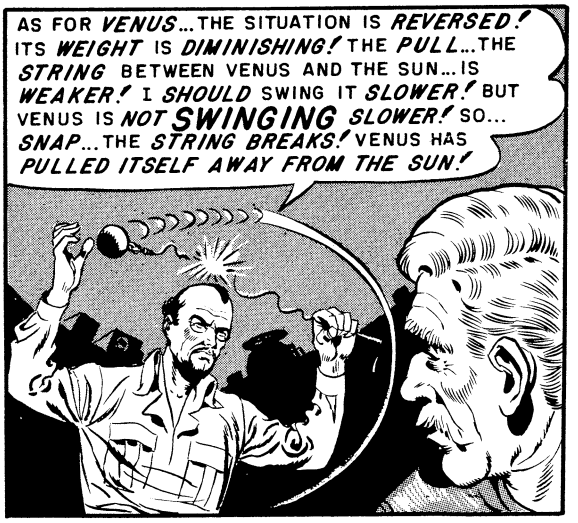
THE NEWS OF THESE ALARMING OBSERVATIONS REACHED ANTHONY W. BRISBANE, PRESIDENT OF U.M.C., AND HE ROCKETED BACK TO EARTH...

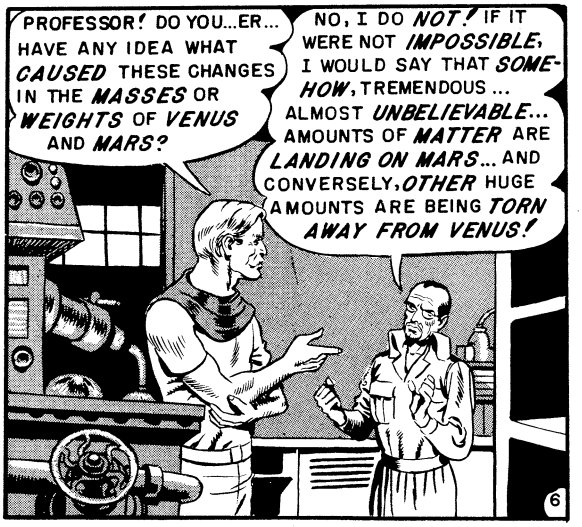
WHY? CAN'T WE STOP IT? I'VE GOT A TREMENDOUS INVESTMENT UP THERE!
I KNOW ABOUT YOUR URANIUM STRIKE UP THERE, MR. BRISBANE... BUT ALL I CAN SAY IS... GET WHAT YOU CAN WHILE YOU CAN! MARS AND VENUS ARE DOOMED!

IT IS MY THEORY THAT MARS'S MASS MUST BE INCREASING! YOU SEE, THE MASS OF A PLANET AND ITS ORBITAL SPEED ARE THE FACTORS THAT DETERMINE ITS PATH AROUND THE SUN...

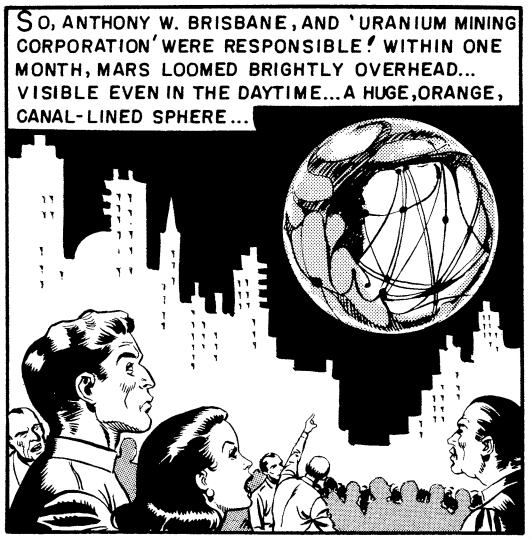
LET ME DEMONSTRATE! I TIE THIS BALL TO A STRING AND BEGIN SWINGING IT... SO... IN A CIRCLE! MY HAND REPRESENTS THE SUN... THE BALL, MARS! THE STRING REPRESENTS THE GRAVITATIONAL ATTRACTION BETWEEN MARS AND THE SUN! THE CIRCLE IS THE ORBIT! HOW FAST I SWING IT... THE PLANET'S ORBITAL SPEED!

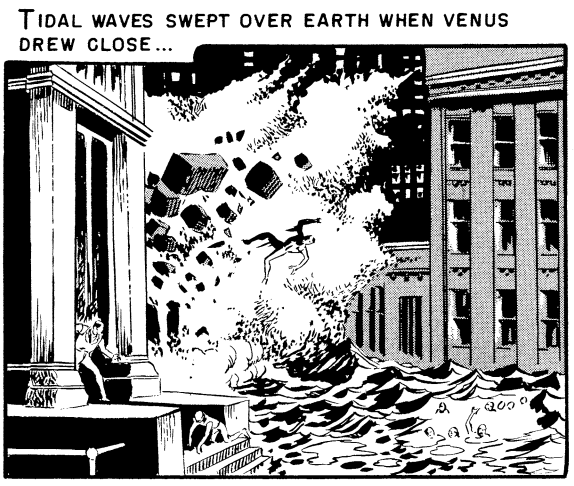

BUT... IF THE WEIGHT OF THE BALL WERE CHANGED... MADE HEAVIER... I WOULD HAVE TO SWING IT FASTER TO KEEP IT GOING! BUT MARS IS NOT GOING FASTER! AND I SAY ITS WEIGHT IS INCREASING! THEREFORE... PLOP... IT FALLS TOWARD MY HAND... THE SUN! ONE MIGHT SAY THAT THE SUN IS PULLING IT IN!

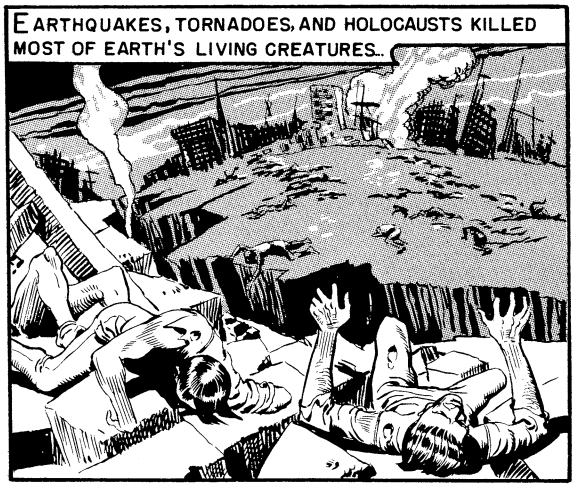

AS FOR VENUS... THE SITUATION IS REVERSED! ITS WEIGHT IS DIMINISHING! THE PULL... THE STRING BETWEEN VENUS AND THE SUN... IS WEAKER! I SHOULD SWING IT SLOWER! BUT VENUS IS NOT SWINGING SLOWER! SO... SNAP... THE STRING BREAKS! VENUS HAS PULLED ITSELF AWAY FROM THE SUN!

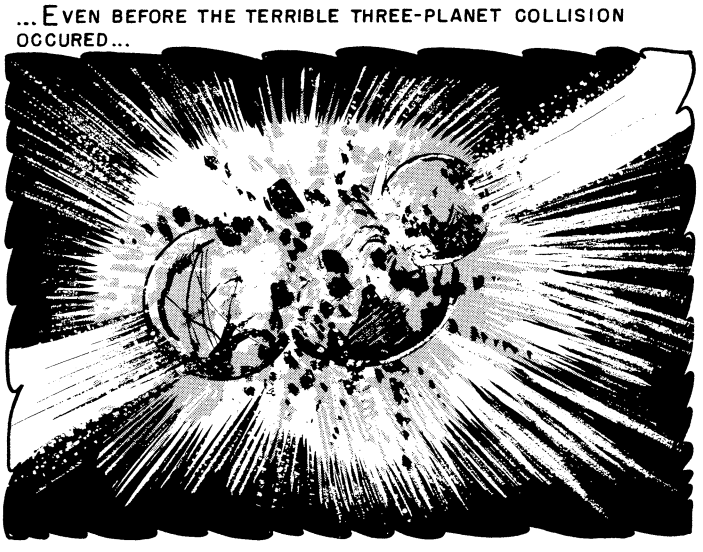

PROFESSOR! DO YOU... ER... HAVE ANY IDEA WHAT CAUSED THESE CHANGES IN THE MASSES OR WEIGHTS OF VENUS AND MARS?
NO, I DO NOT! IF IT WERE NOT IMPOSSIBLE, I WOULD SAY THAT SOMEHOW, TREMENDOUS... ALMOST UNBELIEVABLE... AMOUNTS OF MATTER ARE LANDING ON MARS... AND CONVERSELY, OTHER HUGE AMOUNTS ARE BEING TORN AWAY FROM VENUS!
6

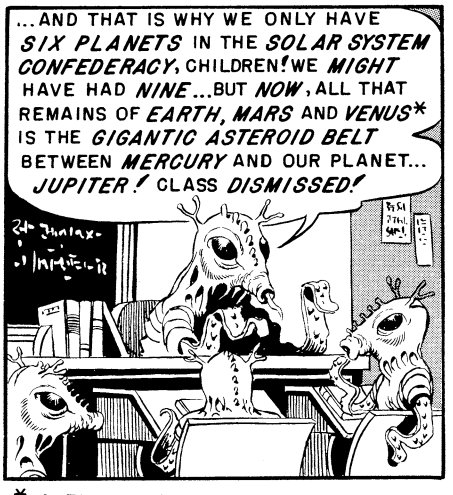
C-COULD... COULD ONE BILLION TONS OF...ER... MATTER PER DAY FOR FIVE YEARS DO IT?
OF COURSE! DO YOU REALIZE HOW CRITICAL THIS MASS-SPEED BALANCE IS?
I... I... DID YOU EVER HEAR OF TELEPORTATION, PROFESSOR? THE TRANSMITTING OF MATTER THROUGH SPACE VIA MICROWAVE RADIO?
WHY, YES! I... I... GOOD LORD! YOUR URANIUM STRIKE! IT'S VENUSIAN ORE, ISN'T IT?
WE'VE BEEN TELEPORTING IT TO MARS!
AND THE WASTE...THE LEFT-OVER! YOU DIDN'T TELEPORT IT BACK?
NO! WE DIDN'T THINK...
THERE'S YOUR ANSWER, MR. BRISBANE! AND IT'S TOO LATE NOW TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT!
WHY? COULDN'T WE...
IT WOULD TAKE FIVE YEARS, MR. BRISBANE!
WE COULD BUILD MORE MACHINES! WE COULD...
ON ITS WAY IN, MARS CROSSES EARTH'S ORBIT IN TWO MONTHS, MR. BRISBANE!
...AND VENUS?
ALSO... IN TWO MONTHS... ON ITS WAY OUT! WHAT WE HAVEN'T TOLD ANYONE... BECAUSE THERE AREN'T ENOUGH ROCKET SHIPS TO GO AROUND!...IS...
7


SO, ANTHONY W. BRISBANE, AND 'URANIUM MINING CORPORATION' WERE RESPONSIBLE! WITHIN ONE MONTH, MARS LOOMED BRIGHTLY OVERHEAD... VISIBLE EVEN IN THE DAYTIME...A HUGE, ORANGE, CANAL-LINED SPHERE...








...AND THAT IS WHY WE ONLY HAVE SIX PLANETS IN THE SOLAR SYSTEM CONFEDERACY, CHILDREN! WE MIGHT HAVE HAD NINE...BUT NOW, ALL THAT REMAINS OF EARTH, MARS AND VENUS* IS THE GIGANTIC ASTEROID BELT BETWEEN MERCURY AND OUR PLANET... JUPITER! CLASS DISMISSED!

*NAMES OF PLANETS TRANSLATED, OF COURSE! —ED.

The GREEN THING!

OUTSIDE THE BARN, THE FIRST GREY STREAKS OF DAWN FINGERED THEIR WAY UPWARD FROM THE EASTERN HORIZON! THE NIGHT SKY, NOW FAST FADING, STILL WAS PINPOINTED HERE AND THERE BY THE BRIGHTER MORNING STARS MORE CAPABLE OF FIGHTING OFF THE COMING DAYLIGHT! GEORGE MENZIES SAT ON THE BATTERED STOOL BESIDE BOSSIE, HIS ONLY COW...NURSING THE LAST FEW DROPLETS OF PRECIOUS MILK FROM HER UDDER! THE KEROSENE LAMP ABOVE HIM GLOWED CHEERILY! SUDDENLY, A BLINDING WHITE FLASH EXPLODED...PAINTING THE BARN MOMENTARILY IN A COLD BRILLIANT LIGHT...

GEORGE SPUN AROUND, ACCIDENTALLY KICKING OVER THE BUCKET OF MILK! HE CURSED LOUDLY! A LAUGH RIPPLED THROUGH THE BARN...

THE BOY WAS TALL AND THIN WITH A SENSITIVE FACE! HE WAS SIXTEEN AT THE MOST! HE CLUTCHED THE SMALL CAMERA WITH THE NEW FLASHGUN ATTACHMENT AND STARED AT THE EVER-WIDENING POOL OF WHITE LIQUID...

GOSH, PAW! I'M SORRY! I DIDN'T MEAN TO MAKE YOU DO THAT! I...I JUST WANTED TO TRY IT OUT... THE FLASHGUN...
GET OUT OF HERE BEFORE I WRING YOUR NECK, YOU LAZY-GOOD-FOR-NOTHING! GET OUT! GET OUT!

KENNY TURNED QUICKLY AND SLIPPED OUT OF THE BARN! HIS FATHER'S ANGRY VOICE BOOMED AFTER HIM...

WASTING YOUR MONEY ON *TRASH!* FOOLIN' *AROUND* WHEN YOU *SHOULD BE HELPIN' WITH THE CHORES!*

ALL RIGHT, PAW! *ALL RIGHT!*

THE BOY MOVED ACROSS THE BARNYARD TOWARD THE OLD HOUSE! AN OVERALLS-CLAD FIGURE CAME OUT! IT WAS HANK LUBBERS, THE HIRED HAND...

MORNIN', KENNY! WHAT'S ALL THE *YELLIN'* ABOUT?

AW, IT'S *PAW,* HANK! I JUST TOOK HIS *PICTURE,* AND HE KNOCKED OVER THE *MILK! HE'S STEAMIN'!*

TOOK HIS *PICTURE?* THIS TIME O' THE *MORNIN'?*

YEP! GOT A *FLASH ATTACHMENT* FOR MY CAMERA... BOUGHT SOME *FILTERS,* TOO! I...I...

THE ROAR SEEMED TO COME FROM EVERYWHERE AT ONCE! IT FILLED THE DAWN AIR LIKE SOME GIGANTIC WATERFALL! ITS VIBRATIONS SHOOK THE FARMHOUSE AND THE RUNDOWN BUILDINGS AROUND! KENNY SCREAMED ABOVE IT! MR. MENZIES DARTED WIDE-EYED FROM THE BARN...

LOOK! UP THERE! LOOK!

JUMPIN' CATFISH!

GOOD LORD! WHAT IS IT?

THE GLEAMING THING SHOT LOW OVER THE ROOFTOPS, STREAKING DOWNWARD...

IT'S *A SPACESHIP,* PAW! *A SPACESHIP!*

IT'S HEADIN' FOR THE SOUTH PASTURE!

GET MY *GUN,* HANK!

HANK, THE HIRED HAND, SPED ACROSS THE FARMYARD TOWARD THE HOUSE! THE SILVERY OBJECT DISAPPEARED OVER THE CREST OF THE SOUTH PASTURE AND SANK FROM VIEW! SUDDENLY, THE GREY SKY WAS RUPTURED BY A FLAMING ORANGE GLOW...

IT'S *CRASHED!* IT'S *BLOWED UP!*

HURRY, HANK!

MRS. MENZIES! MRS. MENZIES! BRING OUT THE *GUN!*

A FRAIL WHITE-HAIRED WOMAN SWUNG THROUGH THE SCREEN DOOR, HER FACE PALLID! SHE CARRIED A RIFLE! HANK REACHED FOR IT...

WHAT *WAS* IT?

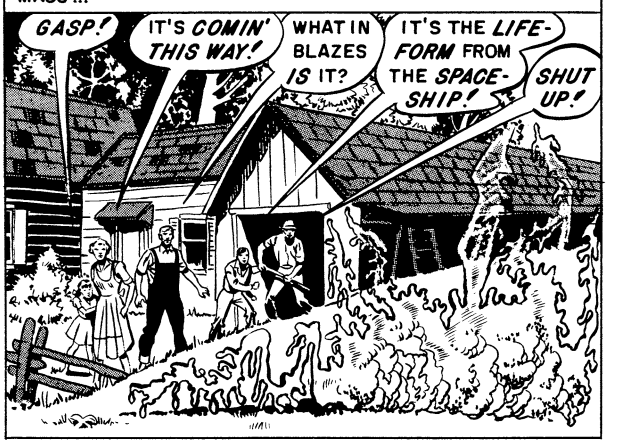
DUNNO! KENNY SAYS IT'S A *SPACESHIP!*

CRAZY KID! HIM AND HIS *SCIENCE-FICTION MAGAZINES!*

2

THE ORANGE GLOW FADED, AND THE GREY SKY CLOSED DOWN ONCE MORE! A YOUNG GIRL PEERED FROM THE FARMHOUSE DOOR! ALL EYES FACED THE SOUTH PASTURE RIM...

IT SLID NOISELESSLY, CLOSE TO THE GROUND! IT WAS GREEN AND WISPY! TENTACLES OF TRANSPARENT GREEN WHIPPED OUTWARD FROM ITS EVER-CHANGING GASEOUS MASS...

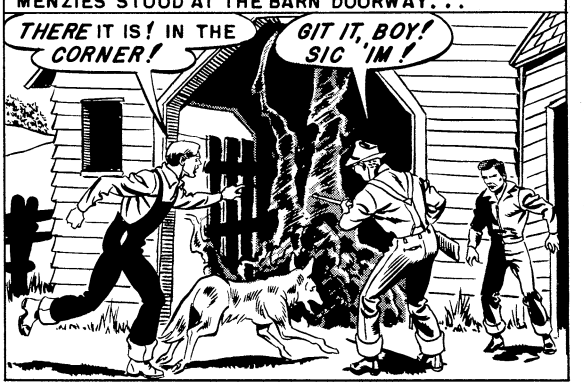


THE GREEN CLOUD ROLLED SILENTLY OVER THE NEWLY HARVESTED FIELD TOWARD THE HORRIFIED HUMANS! IN THE BARN, BOSSIE MOVED ANXIOUSLY! THE MARE WHINNIED NERVOUSLY...

THE BARN DOOR WAS OPEN! THE GREEN, WISPY THING GLIDED INSIDE! BOSSIE SCREAMED! THE MARE KICKED IN HER STALL...

INSIDE THE FARMHOUSE, A DOG WHINED! MR. MENZIES STARTED TOWARD THE BARN! HE SHOUTED OVER HIS SHOULDER...

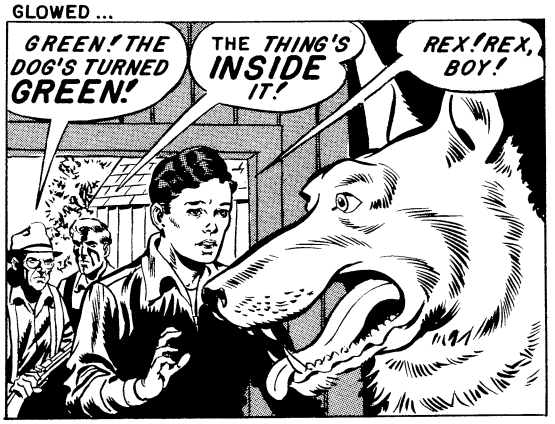
THE FARMER IGNORED HIS SON'S PROTEST! HANK CAME OUT OF THE FARMHOUSE WITH THE DOG! ITS NECK HAIRS BRISTLED! A LOW GROWL RUMBLED IN ITS THROAT! ITS FANGS WERE BARED! HANK AND MR. MENZIES STOOD AT THE BARN DOORWAY...



THE GREEN THING GLOWED IN THE CORNER, TURNING AND TWISTING! THE DOG LEAPED ACROSS THE BARN FLOOR AT IT! GEORGE MENZIES RAISED HIS GUN...

3

KENNY STOOD IN THE BARN DOORWAY, HIS EYES WIDE IN TERROR! HE CALLED AGAIN AND AGAIN! THE DOG TURNED, WHITE FANGS FLASHING! IT GLOWED ...



THE DOG LEAPED AT THE TERROR-STRICKEN YOUTH... ITS OPEN MOUTH OOZING DROOL! HIS FATHER RAISED HIS GUN AND FIRED...

THE DOG TWISTED GROTESQUELY IN THE AIR AS THE BULLETS STRUCK IT! IT FELL TO THE BARN FLOOR, JUST SHY OF THE CRINGING YOUTH...

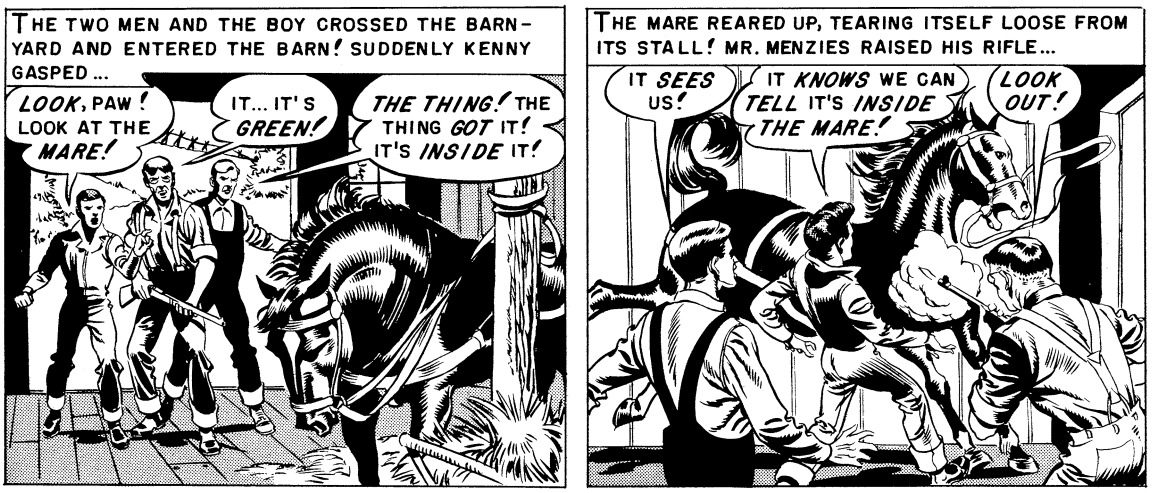
THE GREEN CLOUD ROSE FROM THE DOG AND STREAKED OUT OF THE BARN...

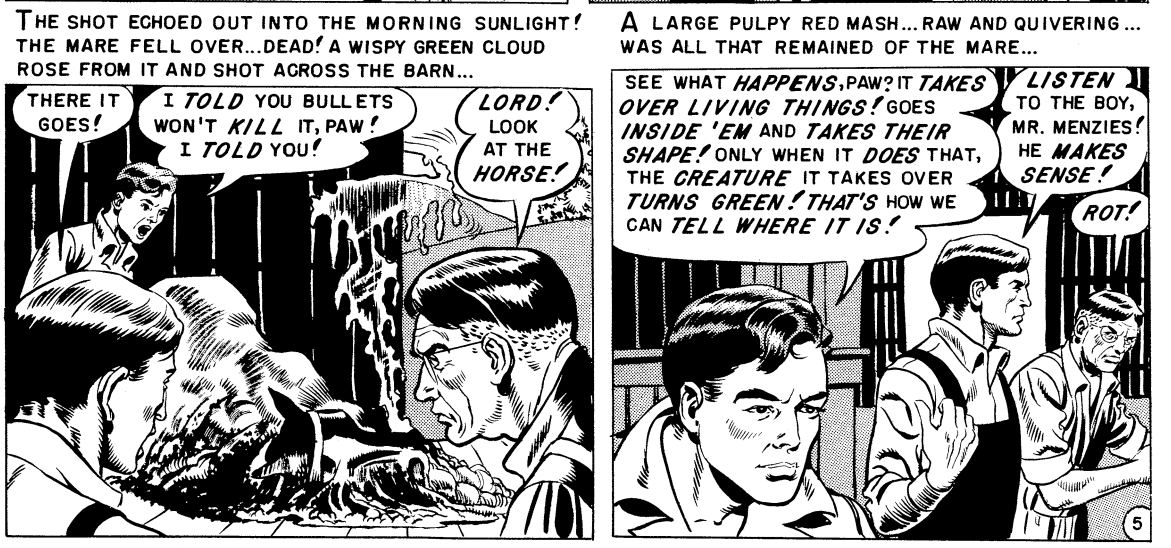
A REDDISH PULPY MASS OF OOZE LAY ON THE BARN FLOOR WHERE THE DOG HAD BEEN! REX'S FORM HAD COMPLETELY DISSOLVED...

THE WOMAN AND THE LITTLE GIRL WERE HIDING IN THE KITCHEN WHEN THE BOY AND THE TWO MEN CAME IN...

WHY NOT, KENNY?
BECAUSE! IT ISN'T HUMAN LIKE US! IT'S TRANSPARENT! IT'S DIFFERENT! DIDN'T IT GO INTO REX... BECOME REX? IT'S ALIEN!
ALIEN! MORE SCIENCE-FICTION ROT! KENNY! SHUT UP!
4

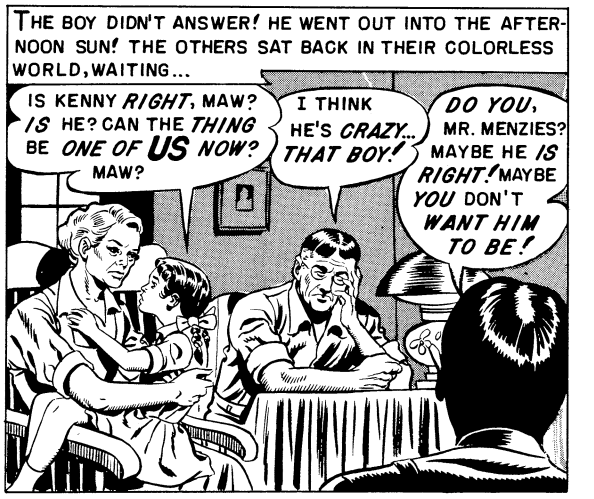
MRS. MENZIES HURRIED ACROSS THE KITCHEN TO THE PHONE...
I'M GOING TO CALL THE POLICE! WE CAN'T FIGHT THIS THING ALONE!
SHE PICKED UP THE RECEIVER AND LISTENED...
IT... IT'S DEAD!
THE SPACE-SHIP MUST'VE KNOCKED DOWN THE WIRES!
WHERE YUH GOIN', HANK?
I THOUGHT I SAW IT...JUST FOR A SECOND... GOIN' INTO THE BARN!
C'MON! I'LL GO WITH YOU!
I'M COMING, TOO!


THE TWO MEN AND THE BOY CROSSED THE BARN-YARD AND ENTERED THE BARN! SUDDENLY KENNY GASPED...
LOOK, PAW! LOOK AT THE MARE!
IT... IT'S GREEN!
THE THING! THE THING GOT IT! IT'S INSIDE IT!
THE MARE REARED UP, TEARING ITSELF LOOSE FROM ITS STALL! MR. MENZIES RAISED HIS RIFLE...
IT SEES US!
IT KNOWS WE CAN TELL IT'S INSIDE THE MARE!
LOOK OUT!


THE SHOT ECHOED OUT INTO THE MORNING SUNLIGHT! THE MARE FELL OVER...DEAD! A WISPY GREEN CLOUD ROSE FROM IT AND SHOT ACROSS THE BARN...
A LARGE PULPY RED MASH... RAW AND QUIVERING... WAS ALL THAT REMAINED OF THE MARE...
THERE IT GOES!
I TOLD YOU BULLETS WON'T KILL IT, PAW! I TOLD YOU!
LORD! LOOK AT THE HORSE!
SEE WHAT HAPPENS, PAW? IT TAKES OVER LIVING THINGS! GOES INSIDE 'EM AND TAKES THEIR SHAPE! ONLY WHEN IT DOES THAT, THE CREATURE IT TAKES OVER TURNS GREEN! THAT'S HOW WE CAN TELL WHERE IT IS!
LISTEN TO THE BOY, MR. MENZIES! HE MAKES SENSE!
ROT!
5

THEY WENT BACK TO THE HOUSE! THE BOY KEPT PLEADING...
DO IT MY WAY, PAW! WAIT TILL WE SEE SOMETHING...THE COW... THE PIGS...ANYTHING! WAIT TILL WE SEE THEM TURN GREEN! THEN...
GET INSIDE! WHAT DO YOU KNOW? READIN' ALL THEM CRAZY BOOKS HAS TURNED YOU LOCO!
THEY WERE ALL IN THE KITCHEN WHEN IT HAPPENED...THE BOY...HIS YOUNG SISTER...THE MOTHER...THE FATHER...AND THE HIRED HAND! THE SMELL WAS SWEET...ALMOST BURNING! WHEN THEY CAME TO...
GASP!
WHAT IS IT? WHAT HAPPENED?
EVERY-THING'S TURNED DARK!
EVERY-THING'S GREY!
THE THING! IT MADE US COLOR BLIND!
COLOR BLIND? WHY?
DON'T YOU SEE, PAW? IT KNOWS WE CAN TELL WHERE IT IS BY THE COLOR OF THE ANIMAL IT TAKES OVER! THE GREEN! NOW WE CAN'T TELL! WE CAN'T TELL COLORS! EVERYTHING IS GREY!
THE BOY IS RIGHT, MR. MENZIES!
WHAT DO WE DO NOW, KENNY?
BEATS ME, PAW! WE DON'T EVEN KNOW WHERE IT IS! WHY FOR ALL WE KNOW...
IT...IT MIGHT BE HERE... ONE OF US!
GOOD LORD!
KENNY! STOP IT! YOU'RE SCARING SARAH!
I CAN'T HELP IT, MAW! IT MIGHT BE BOSSIE...IN THE BARN! AND IT MIGHT BE YOU...OR PAW...OR HANK... OR SARAH...OR ME!
MAMA! MAMA!
HUSH, SARAH! GEORGE! TELL HIM TO KEEP STILL!
WHAT'S IT WANT WITH US, KENNY? WHAT'S IT HERE FOR?
I DON'T KNOW, HANK! MAYBE IT'S HERE TO CONQUER EARTH! MAYBE IT'S HERE ACCIDENTALLY! MAYBE IT DIDN'T MEAN TO CRASH! I DON'T KNOW! BUT... WE'VE GOT TO FIND IT AND DESTROY IT!
6

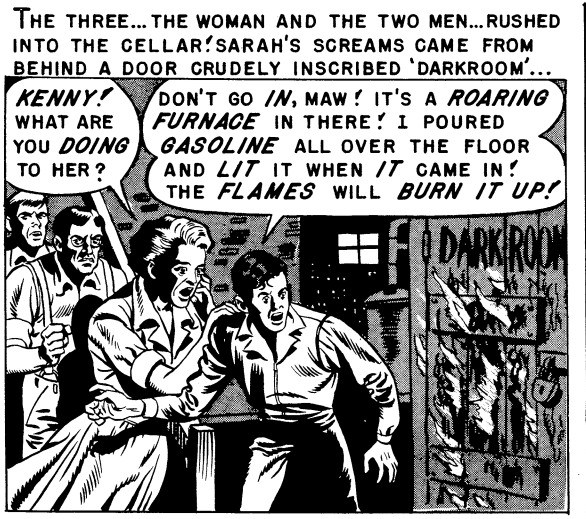
THE THING DIDN'T APPEAR FOR THE REST OF THE DAY! THE PEOPLE HUDDLED IN THE FARMHOUSE STARED AT EACH OTHER... STARED AT GREY FACES...
KENNY! WHERE YOU GOIN'?
I'M GOIN' OUT, MAW! I'M GOIN' T' FIND IT!
HOW, SON? HOW?

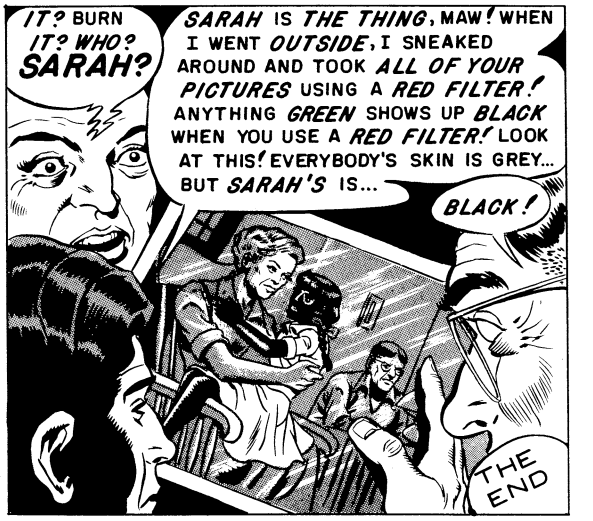

THE BOY DIDN'T ANSWER! HE WENT OUT INTO THE AFTERNOON SUN! THE OTHERS SAT BACK IN THEIR COLORLESS WORLD, WAITING...
IS KENNY RIGHT, MAW? IS HE? CAN THE THING BE ONE OF US NOW? MAW?
I THINK HE'S CRAZY... THAT BOY!
DO YOU, MR. MENZIES? MAYBE HE IS RIGHT! MAYBE YOU DON'T WANT HIM TO BE!

KENNY CAME BACK INTO THE HOUSE SOON AFTER! HE STRODE ACROSS THE KITCHEN...
WHERE YOU GOIN', SON?
DOWN THE CELLAR!

AFTER A WHILE HE CALLED UP...
SARAH! HEY, SIS! C'MON DOWN! I WANT TO SHOW YOU SOMETHING!
CAN I, MAW?
IT'S OKAY, SARAH! GO AHEAD!

THE YOUNG GIRL WENT DOWNSTAIRS! FOR A WHILE ALL WAS QUIET! THEN...
EEEEEEEEEE...
WHAT THE...


THE THREE... THE WOMAN AND THE TWO MEN... RUSHED INTO THE CELLAR! SARAH'S SCREAMS CAME FROM BEHIND A DOOR CRUDELY INSCRIBED 'DARKROOM'...
KENNY! WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO HER?
DON'T GO IN, MAW! IT'S A ROARING FURNACE IN THERE! I POURED GASOLINE ALL OVER THE FLOOR AND LIT IT WHEN IT CAME IN! THE FLAMES WILL BURN IT UP!
DARK ROOM


IT? BURN IT? WHO? SARAH?
SARAH IS THE THING, MAW! WHEN I WENT OUTSIDE, I SNEAKED AROUND AND TOOK ALL OF YOUR PICTURES USING A RED FILTER! ANYTHING GREEN SHOWS UP BLACK WHEN YOU USE A RED FILTER! LOOK AT THIS! EVERYBODY'S SKIN IS GREY... BUT SARAH'S IS...
BLACK!
THE END

THE WIND-UP TO THIS SCIENCE-FICTION YARN SHOULD GIVE YOU QUITE A JOLT...!

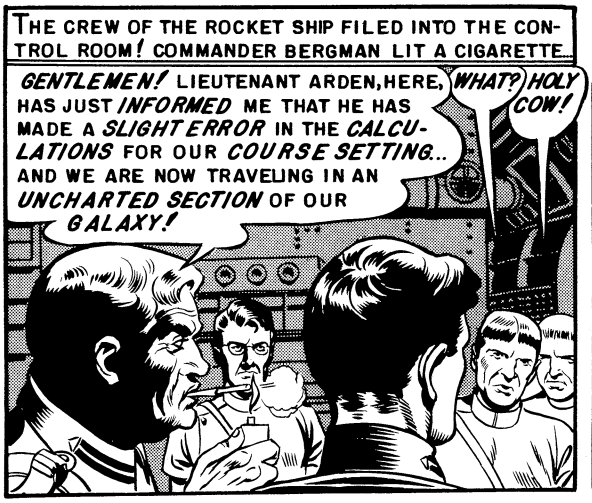
NOT SO TOUGH!

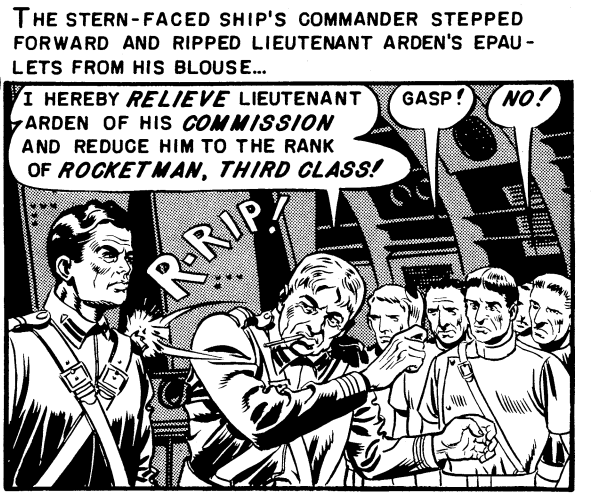
IT BEGAN WHEN LIEUTENANT ARDEN, THE ASTRO-NAVIGATOR, CAME TO THE ROCKET SHIP COMMANDER...
WHAT? ARE YOU SURE? HAVE YOU CHECKED YOUR FIGURES?
YES, SIR! WHEN WE CROSSED THE SEVENTH DEGREE AZIMUTH AND I STILL HADN'T SIGHTED TAUSARUS III, I CHECKED! WE'RE DEFINITELY LOST!
COMMANDER BERGMAN CURSED...
I'LL BUST YOU FOR THIS, ARDEN! I'LL SEE YOU SCRUBBING EXHAUST TUBES WHEN I GET THROUGH WITH YOU!
I DON'T KNOW WHERE I MADE MY MISTAKE, SIR! I'VE GONE BACK OVER MY COURSE CALCULATIONS A DOZEN TIMES...
A SCIENCE-FICTION SUSPENSTORY
1

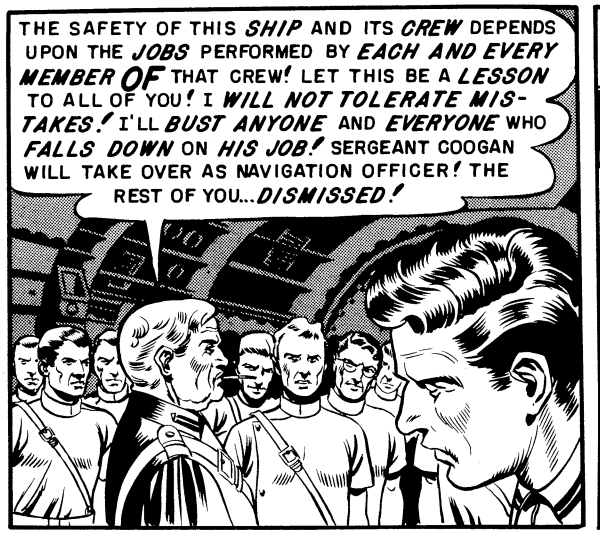
I DON'T GIVE A HOOT WHERE YOU MADE YOUR STUPID ERROR... THE FACT IS, YOU MADE IT!
YES, SIR!

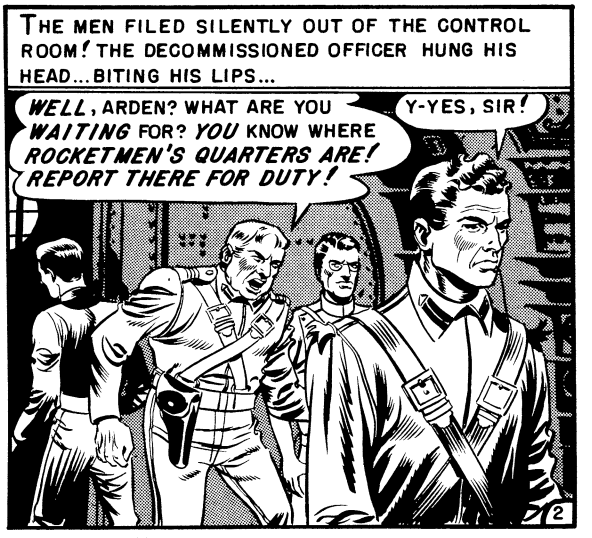
COMMANDER BERGMAN SNATCHED UP THE SHIP'S INTERCOM MIKE AND BARKED INTO IT...
ATTENTION! ATTENTION... ALL HANDS! REPORT TO THE CONTROL ROOM... IMMEDIATELY!
I'LL TRY TO BACK-TRACK, SIR... AND FIGURE OUR EXACT LOCATION!

NEVER MIND! ONE MISTAKE IS ENOUGH! YOU'RE THROUGH, ARDEN! WASHED UP!
BUT... SIR...


THE CREW OF THE ROCKET SHIP FILED INTO THE CONTROL ROOM! COMMANDER BERGMAN LIT A CIGARETTE...
GENTLEMEN! LIEUTENANT ARDEN, HERE, HAS JUST INFORMED ME THAT HE HAS MADE A SLIGHT ERROR IN THE CALCULATIONS FOR OUR COURSE SETTING... AND WE ARE NOW TRAVELING IN AN UNCHARTED SECTION OF OUR GALAXY!
WHAT? HOLY COW!


THE STERN-FACED SHIP'S COMMANDER STEPPED FORWARD AND RIPPED LIEUTENANT ARDEN'S EPAULETS FROM HIS BLOUSE...
I HEREBY RELIEVE LIEUTENANT ARDEN OF HIS COMMISSION AND REDUCE HIM TO THE RANK OF ROCKETMAN, THIRD CLASS!
GASP!
NO!
R-RIP!


THE SAFETY OF THIS SHIP AND ITS CREW DEPENDS UPON THE JOBS PERFORMED BY EACH AND EVERY MEMBER OF THAT CREW! LET THIS BE A LESSON TO ALL OF YOU! I WILL NOT TOLERATE MISTAKES! I'LL BUST ANYONE AND EVERYONE WHO FALLS DOWN ON HIS JOB! SERGEANT COOGAN WILL TAKE OVER AS NAVIGATION OFFICER! THE REST OF YOU... DISMISSED!

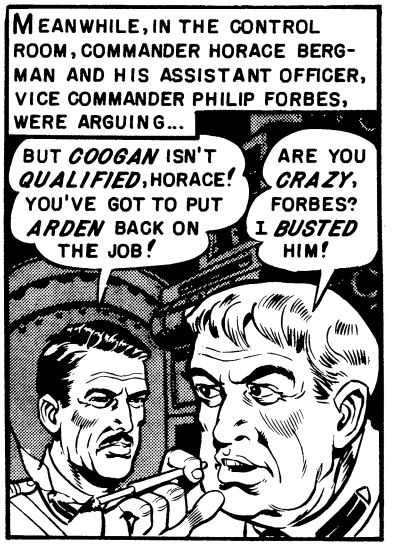

THE MEN FILED SILENTLY OUT OF THE CONTROL ROOM! THE DECOMMISSIONED OFFICER HUNG HIS HEAD... BITING HIS LIPS...
WELL, ARDEN? WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR? YOU KNOW WHERE ROCKETMEN'S QUARTERS ARE! REPORT THERE FOR DUTY!
Y-YES, SIR!
2

ROBERT ARDEN MOVED DOWN THE CORRIDOR AND OPENED THE DOOR TO THE ROCKETMEN'S QUARTERS! INSIDE, THE NOISE OF BABBLING VOICES DIED SUDDENLY AS ALL EYES TURNED TOWARD HIM! THERE WAS A MOMENT OF AWKWARD SILENCE AND THEN...

THEY CROWDED AROUND HIM, OFFERING THEIR SYMPATHY...

GEE, LIEUTENANT! WE'RE *SORRY*...
ROCKETMAN *THIRD CLASS*, NOW! NOT '*LIEUTENANT!*' AND... CALL ME *BOB!*
JUST FOR ONE *MISTAKE!* ONE *LOUSY MISTAKE!* WHAT A *DIRTY TRICK!*

YOU *HEARD* THE OLD MAN! *ONE MISTAKE* COULD MEAN THE *SAFETY* OF THE *SHIP* AND THE *CREW!*
SURE, BOB! BUT EVEN THE *BEST* GUYS MAKE A *MISTAKE!* OKAY! BUT TO *BUST YOU*... RIGHT TO THE *BOTTOM!* THAT'S *TOO HARD*...


MEANWHILE, IN THE CONTROL ROOM, COMMANDER HORACE BERGMAN AND HIS ASSISTANT OFFICER, VICE COMMANDER PHILIP FORBES, WERE ARGUING...
BUT *COOGAN* ISN'T *QUALIFIED*, HORACE! YOU'VE GOT TO PUT *ARDEN* BACK ON THE JOB!
ARE YOU *CRAZY*, FORBES? I *BUSTED* HIM!

RECOMMISSION HIM! HE MIGHT *FIND* HIS MISTAKE AND FIGURE OUR *LOCATION!* FRANKLY, I'M *WORRIED!* WE ONLY HAVE *TWO MONTHS' OXYGEN SUPPLY LEFT!* SUPPOSE COOGAN *CAN'T* LOCATE US! *THEN* WHAT? WE JUST CAN'T *WANDER AROUND* TILL THE *OXYGEN GIVES OUT!*
AND *I* CAN'T *RECOMMISSION ARDEN!* WHY, THE CREW WILL THINK I'VE *GONE SOFT!*

SO *WHAT?* MAYBE YOU *OUGHT* TO *EASE UP!* YOU'RE *ALWAYS DOWN ON THEM*... *DRIVING THEM!* MAYBE YOU *SHOULD SOFTEN UP!*
I THINK I'VE HEARD *ENOUGH*, FORBES! THE SHIP IS UNDER *MY* COMMAND! I MUST *MAKE SURE* THAT *DISCIPLINE* IS *MAINTAINED!* IF IT MEANS BEING *HARD* ON THE MEN, THEN I'LL BE *HARD* ON THEM! ARDEN *STAYS BROKEN!* THAT'S *ALL*...
3

VICE COMMANDER PHILIP FORBES SLAMMED THE DOOR TO THE CONTROL ROOM AFTER HIM AND MUTTERED UNDER HIS BREATH...
SOMEDAY... BERGMAN! SOMEDAY YOU'LL SOFTEN UP!
AFTER ONE MONTH OF WANDERING... HOPELESSLY LOST... THROUGH THE VAST VOID OF THE UNCHARTED GALAXY, SERGEANT COOGAN ANNOUNCED...
I'M SORRY, SIR! I'VE DONE MY BEST! I'VE CHECKED AND RECHECKED ARDEN'S FIGURES! I CAN'T FIND HIS MISTAKE!
I CAN'T ...
SERGEANT COOGAN OPENED THE DOOR TO THE ROCKETMEN'S QUARTERS AND CROSSED TO HIS BUNK! HE SAT DOWN, HIS HEAD IN HIS HANDS...
WHAT HAPPENED, COOGAN?
HE...HE KICKED ME OUT! I... TRIED... BUT I COULDN'T DO IT! I COULDN'T FIND YOUR MISTAKE! SO HE BUSTED ME!
AND THEN, THE COMMANDER ANNOUNCED...
WE HAVE LESS THAN ONE MONTH'S SUPPLY OF OXYGEN LEFT! STARTING TODAY, WE'RE CUTTING DOWN UNTIL WE CAN REPLENISH OUR SUPPLY! WE WILL BE USING THE ABSOLUTE MINIMUM NEEDED TO SUSTAIN LIFE! YOU WILL LIMIT YOURSELVES TO ONLY ESSENTIAL ACTIVITIES...
IT WAS A WEEK LATER... A WEEK OF GASPING FOR EACH BREATH... WHEN COOGAN SUDDENLY BROKE DOWN...
WE'RE GOING TO DIE! WE'RE ALL GOING TO DIE!
COOGAN! TAKE IT EASY!
THE POOR MAN COMPLETELY LOST CONTROL! HE RAVED HYSTERICALLY UNTIL HE FELL BACK ONTO HIS BUNK, CHOKING...
COUGH...COUGH... GASP...
HE NEEDS AIR! GET AN OXY-BOTTLE UP HERE!
WHAT'S GOING ON?
IT'S COOGAN, SIR! HE'S HAD A BREAKDOWN! HE NEEDS AIR! HE'S CHOKING! I SENT SEELEY FOR AN OXY-BOTTLE!
NEVER MIND! WE NEED EVERY DROP OF OXYGEN LEFT ON BOARD! WE CAN'T AFFORD TO WASTE IT ON ONE MAN...
4

THEY WATCHED COOGAN WRITHE IN HIS HYSTERICAL CONTORTIONS GASPING FOR AIR! FINALLY...
HE...HE'S DEAD!
YOU COULD HAVE SAVED HIM!
I'M INTERESTED ONLY IN SAVING THIS SHIP AND ITS CREW...ALL OF YOU!

EX-LIEUTENANT ARDEN'S FACE FLUSHED CRIMSON! HE SCREAMED AT THE COMMANDER...
HOW COULD YOU BE LIKE THAT? HOW COULD YOU BE SO HARD HEARTED? YOU...YOU MURDERED HIM!
ROCKETMAN ARDEN! I SUGGEST THAT YOU CALM DOWN!

BUT ROCKETMAN ARDEN DIDN'T CALM DOWN! HIS EYES BULGED AS HE SCREECHED AT THE COMMANDER...
MURDERER! MURDERER!
ARDEN!

BLAM!

ROBERT ARDEN PITCHED FORWARD... FACE DOWNWARD...DEAD! THE OTHERS OF THE CREW STARED AT HIM! THE COMMANDER BARKED AN ORDER...
JETTISON THESE TWO BODIES AT ONCE! ANY MORE OUTBURSTS OF THIS KIND WILL BE DEALT WITH THE SAME WAY!

COMMANDER BERGMAN STALKED OUT OF THE ROCKETMEN'S QUARTERS! VICE COMMANDER FORBES STARED AFTER HIM...
WHAT MAKES HIM THAT WAY, SIR? WHAT MAKES HIM SO...SO...
HARD, SEELEY? I DON'T KNOW! BUT SOMEDAY... SOMEDAY HE'LL CHANGE!

THE SHIP WAS ON ITS LAST OXY-BOTTLE WHEN IT ENTERED THE STRANGE SOLAR SYSTEM...
LOOK, SIR! THAT HUGE PLANET! CLOUDS! COVERED WITH CLOUDS! DO YOU THINK...?
OXYGEN ATMOSPHERE! LOOK AT THESE SPECTROGRAPH READINGS! WE CAN REPLENISH OUR SUPPLY!
ATTENTION, ALL HANDS! PREPARE FOR LANDING! PREPARE FOR LANDING!
5

THE SHIP NOSED IN TOWARD THE HUGE PLANET! FASTER AND FASTER IT FELL...
SWING 'ER AROUND! BLAST OFF! WE'RE BEING SUCKED IN TOO FAST!
SHE'S GOT A TREMENDOUS GRAVITATIONAL PULL!
THE REAR ROCKET TUBES BEGAN TO FIRE...SLOWING THE SPACE-CRAFT'S DESCENT...
WE'RE STILL GOING IN TOO FAST!
MORE POWER! MORE POWER!
THE G-PULL! IT'S TOO STRONG! WE'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO STAND IT!
FULL POWER! WE'RE GETTING OUT OF HERE!
FULL POWER WAS APPLIED! BUT...
IT'S NO USE! WE CAN'T GET BACK UP! THE G-PULL IS TOO STRONG!
WE'RE GOING IN!
EVEN WITH FULL POWER ON, THE SHIP SMASHED TO THE PLANET'S SURFACE HEAVILY...
YAAAAAAAAAAGGGH!
INSIDE, ON HIS SHOCK COUCH, COMMANDER BERGMAN TRIED TO LIFT HIS HEAD...TRIED TO MOVE HIS ARMS! IT WAS AS IF HE WERE BEING HELD DOWN BY THOUSANDS OF POUNDS OF WEIGHT...
UUUNNNNNNNNNGG!
AND THEN HIS BODY... A BODY NOT ABLE TO WITHSTAND SUCH A GRAVITATIONAL PULL... JUST SEEMED TO MELT... SPREADING OUT IN A RED PULPY POOL OF OOZE...
YES! COMMANDER HORACE BERGMAN HAD FINALLY GONE SOFT!
THE END!
6

THOMMY BURNS

FLYING SAUCER REPORT REPORT

[Editor's note: The section that follows is a complete cover-to-cover reproduction of Weird Science-Fantasy *#26, December 1954, including the original advertisements. It's a bit different from our usual practice in this series, but this issue was a bit different from every other EC, as it was intended as a serious, if overly earnest and overly credulous, documentary comic book. Pretend these pages are storyboards, and you can see that Al Feldstein, George Evans, Reed Crandall, Joe Orlando, and Wallace Wood have pre-visualized your documentary film for you. By the way, no other reprints of this material have ever included the original ads. And after reading them — yeah, we probably won't do it again, either. – JMC]*

In 1954, America was in the throes of a full-scale flying saucer craze. In 1953, an impressively researched book, *Flying Saucers From Outer Space* by Major Donald Keyhoe (USMC, Ret.) had been published, and movies such as *Invaders From Space*, *It Came From Outer Space*, and *War of the Worlds* had done brisk business at the box office.

EC Comics tackled the subject with two very different approaches simultaneously in mid-1954. "I Touched A Flying Saucer" (*Panic* #4, August-September 1954), illustrated by Jack Davis, took the humorous route, lampooning the fervor over flying saucers, while "Flying Saucer Report" (*Weird Science-Fantasy* #25, September 1954), illustrated by Wallace Wood, took a more serious look at the hysteria. (Both stories are scheduled for upcoming volumes in this series.)

Though a fictional story with a patented EC twist ending, "Flying Saucer Report" referenced multiple real cases. This caught the attention of EC readers like Frank Reid of Chicago, who wrote: "I see that in your story there are a number of real flying saucer sightings illustrated. What I'm getting at is this: why not print a genuine saucer report? Most of the interesting sightings have never been illustrated at all. You could be a great help to people interested in flying saucers. Think of it as a public service!"

With *Weird Science-Fantasy* #26 (December 1954), EC did just that.

Perhaps buoyed by reader response to the single "Flying Saucer Report" story, EC published *Weird Science-Fantasy* #26 as a "Special Issue!". "E.C. Challenges The U.S. Air Force With This Illustrated, Factual FLYING SAUCER REPORT," screamed the cover type, going on to tout "Documented Evidence! Names • Places • Dates • Quotes." The editorial page on the inside front cover declared that "Up until now E.C. has dealt with 'The Flying Saucers' in a fictional manner, weaving stories around reported sightings. This time, we have laid 'Fiction' aside. This time we have used only 'Actual Facts'."

Donald Keyhoe's research was the basis for the issue. In addition to his best-selling *Flying Saucers From Outer Space*, Keyhoe had previously written *The Flying Saucers Are Real* in 1950 and was regarded as a leading authority on the subject. As Bill Gaines remembered during the Science Fiction Panel at the 1972 EC Fan-Addict Convention: "Donald Keyhoe was the basis of this ... we called him up and invited him to New York and paid him a substantial fee, as I recall. He spent a whole day with us ... Keyhoe loaned us a lot of material to back up what he said, and (Al) Feldstein wrote the entire thing out of this Keyhoe material." The result was unlike anything EC had ever published before.

Breaking with the standard four-story format of virtually every other EC comic, *Weird Science-Fantasy* #26 contains sixteen stories, each running one to three pages. Art duties are split evenly among Wallace Wood, Reed Crandall, Joe Orlando, and George Evans. Each short reports on a flying saucer sighting with details from various sources, noted on the editorial page as

"Army and Civilian Pilots, Scientists, Technicians, and in one instance, that of an ordained minister." Keyhoe himself is the subject of "The Utah Pictures" (p. 172), which, like each story, ends with a list of questions for the U.S. Air Force. The tone of each piece is factual and based on eyewitness accounts, but discounts any explanation other than interplanetary craft — a conclusion that neither Gaines nor Feldstein were completely convinced of.

At the EC Fan-Addict convention Gaines recalled, "Al and I were about 75% convinced that there were such things as flying saucers. We sure hoped there were. And, in the hope, I think it helped us to delude ourselves into thinking that they really existed."

Feldstein later recalled to biographer Grant Geissman (*Feldstein: The Mad Art and Fantastic Life of Al Feldstein*), "I was always skeptical. Even though I was writing a serious challenge to the Air Force, I really didn't believe what I was reading, because I thought there must be something else to this."

As a challenge to the U.S. Air Force, *Weird Science-Fantasy* #26 was a provocative issue, warranting two full pages of readers' letters in *Weird Science-Fantasy* #28. Letter writers praised EC's "guts" and "gall," with one reader accusing them of potentially compromising national security! Several readers mention by name radio commentator Frank Edwards, who had given *Weird Science-Fantasy* nationwide attention by recommending The Flying Saucer Report issue to his listeners on the Mutual Broadcasting System. The fact that Edwards was dismissed in mid-August of 1954, shortly after plugging the comic, did not go unnoticed and lent a further conspiratorial air to the perceived official "flying saucer cover-up!"

In the final analysis, the issue is an interesting, but minor, addition to the EC canon. The art is typically fantastic, but the writing, "factual" as it is, is comparatively dry. Ultimately, Gaines remembered at the convention being "sorry we'd ever gotten involved with it," due to "publicity on [Frank Edwards's] radio show, which resulted in thousands and thousands of mail orders for this dime book. We were inundated. I remember it was a dreadful thing."

The cosmic reach of the issue continues across the decades, however, and gives me a weird EC-twist ending footnote of my own: I collect EC mailing envelopes, some of which were originally used to mail proofs back and forth between the EC office and Chemical Engravers, who did their color separations. I own the envelope marked "Weird Science 26," indicating that it originally held production materials for the Flying Saucer Report issue itself. Recently, I noticed several pieces of glue-stained lettering at the bottom of the envelope which, with the help of another EC researcher, I was able to match to missing letters from the original cover art for *Weird Science-Fantasy* #26 — and while I was gathering material for this very essay, no less. Weird, indeed!

AN ENTERTAINING COMIC
No. 26
DEC.

WEIRD SCIENCE-FANTASY

AN ENTERTAINING COMIC
10¢

SPECIAL ISSUE!

E.C. CHALLENGES THE U.S. AIR FORCE

WITH THIS ILLUSTRATED, FACTUAL

FLYING SAUCER REPORT

DOCUMENTED EVIDENCE!

NAMES · PLACES · DATES · QUOTES

ABOUT THIS REPORT

Up until now, E.C. has dealt with "The Flying Saucers" in a fictional manner, weaving stories around reported sightings. This time, we have laid "Fiction" aside. This time we have used only "Actual Facts."

THIS IS A CHALLENGE TO THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE!

Of the hundreds and hundreds of cases collected for this report, we have ignored any that did not come from competent trained authorities.

We have used only those sightings reported by Army and Civilian Pilots, Scientists, Technicians, and in one instance, that of an ordained minister.

All statements in this report surrounded by quotation marks are verbatim accounts from authentic sources.

What we have done here is attempted to show the inconsistencies and incongruities of the Air Force's wavering attitude toward this perplexing problem.

We believe that the public has been confused . . . that the facts have been muddled . . . that there is much more to the "Flying Saucer" than the Air Force cares to admit.

We believe that the public should be kept informed of all developments in the "Flying Saucer" story.

We have reason to believe that a group within the Air Force does not agree with this.

We believe that this group, though in the minority, is in control.

We shudder to think of the chaos that could be caused if an uninformed, unprepared public was suddenly and shockingly confronted with tangible proof of the "Flying Saucer's" origin.

This report is an attempt to inform and prepare the public for this possibility.

The Editors

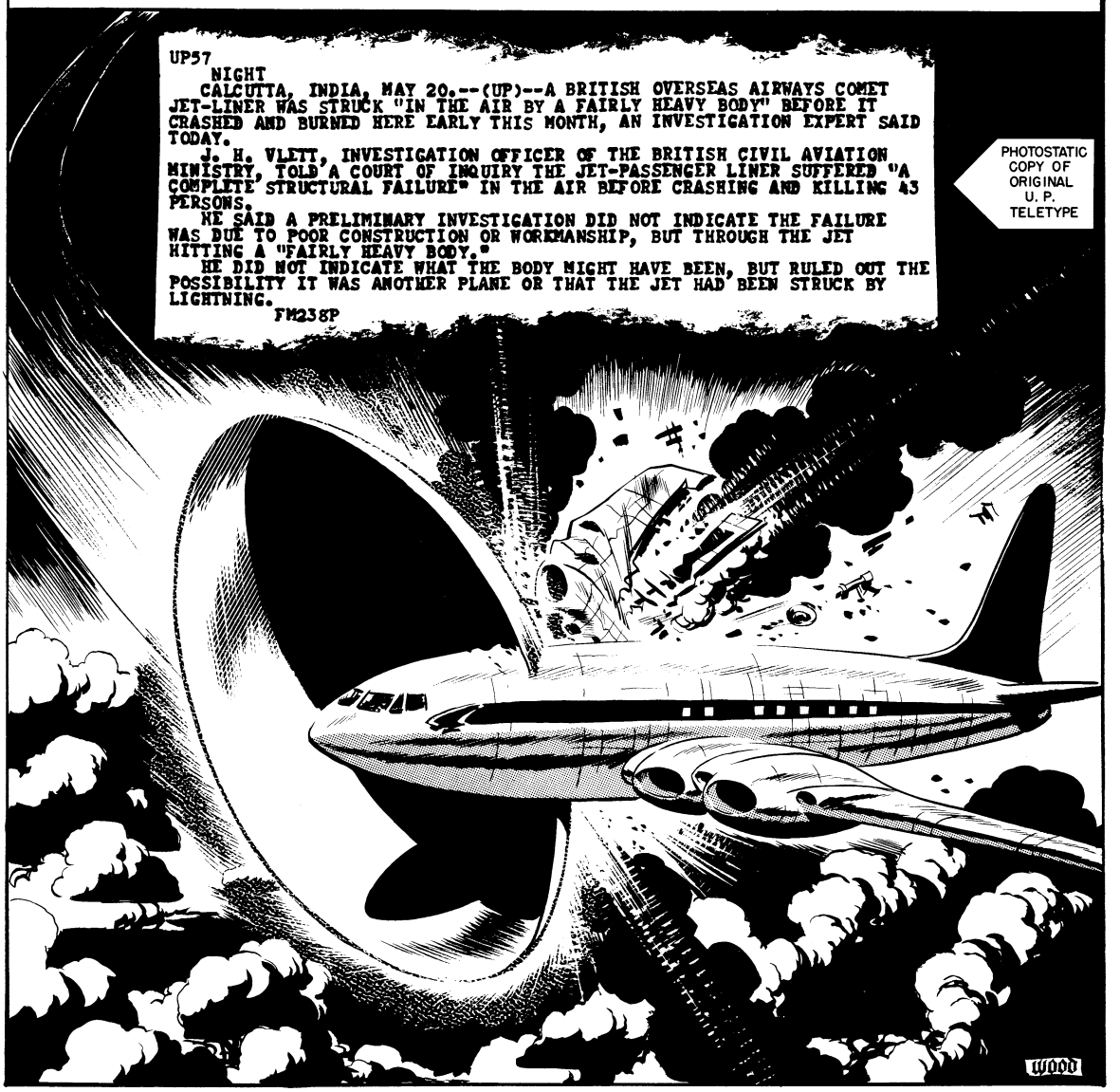
Note: The depictions of the actual people referred to in this report are of the artists' own conception. The "Flying Saucers" herein illustrated are from the artists' own imagination based on actual authentic descriptions.—ed.

WEIRD SCIENCE-FANTASY, Dec. 1954—Volume 1, Number 26. Published Bi-Monthly by Fables Publishing Co., Inc., at 225 Lafayette Street, New York 12, N. Y. William M. Gaines, Managing Editor; Albert B. Feldstein, Editor. Entered as second-class matter at the Post Office at New York, N. Y. Subscription, eight issues for $1.00 in the U. S.; elsewhere, $1.25. Entire contents copyrighted 1954 by Fables Publishing Co., Inc. Printed in U.S.A. Unsolicited manuscripts will not be returned unless accompanied by stamped return envelope. No similarity between any of the characters, names or persons appearing in this magazine with any of those living or dead is intended, and any similarity is purely coincidental.

EARLY IN MAY, 1952, A *BRITISH OVERSEAS AIRWAYS "COMET" JETLINER* CRASHED AND BURNED NEAR CALCUTTA, INDIA, KILLING *43 PERSONS*. YOU *READ* ABOUT IT IN YOUR *DAILY NEWSPAPER*. THE STORIES AS PRINTED GLIBLY BLAMED THE CRASH ON *STRUCTURAL FAILURE, POOR WORKMANSHIP, FAULTY DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION*. ALL "COMET" JETLINERS WERE *GROUNDED*, AND AN *INVESTIGATION* WAS BEGUN. THE INVESTIGATION FOUND NOTHING *WRONG* WITH "COMET" JETLINERS' STRUCTURAL DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION. THE *CASE* WAS *CLOSED*.

THE PATTERN OF SECRECY AND VEILED FACT WAS REPEATED!

AND THE TRUTH WAS NEVER TOLD. HERE! READ THIS:

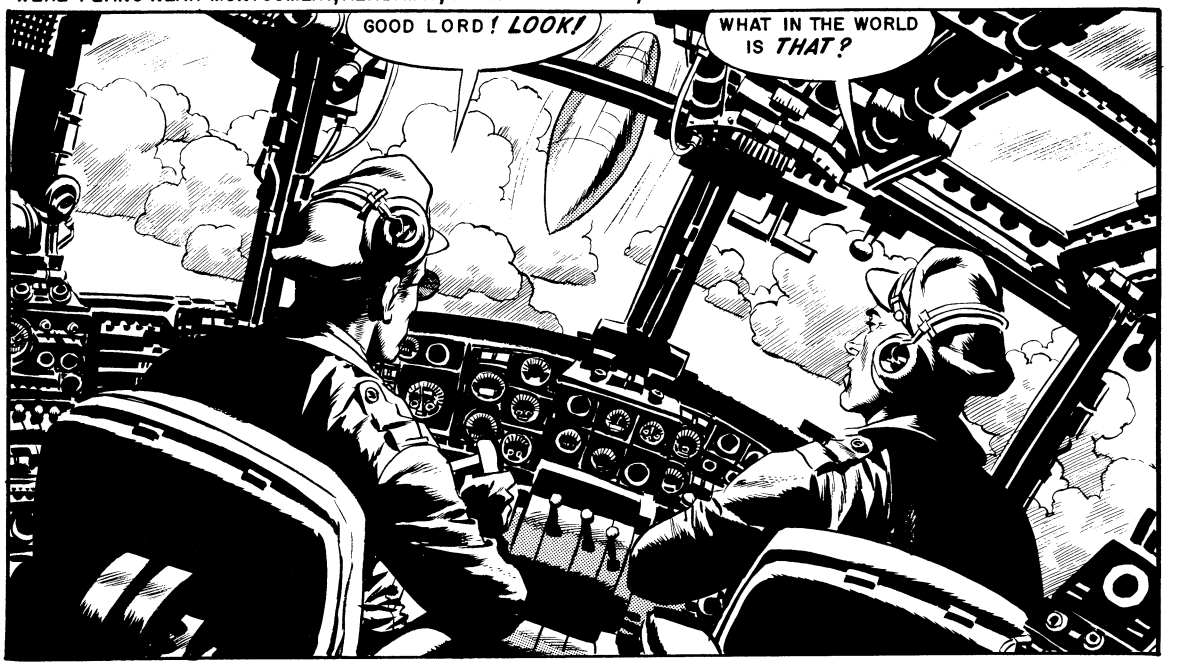

UP57
NIGHT
CALCUTTA, INDIA, MAY 20.--(UP)--A BRITISH OVERSEAS AIRWAYS COMET JET-LINER WAS STRUCK "IN THE AIR BY A FAIRLY HEAVY BODY" BEFORE IT CRASHED AND BURNED HERE EARLY THIS MONTH, AN INVESTIGATION EXPERT SAID TODAY.
J. H. VLETT, INVESTIGATION OFFICER OF THE BRITISH CIVIL AVIATION MINISTRY, TOLD A COURT OF INQUIRY THE JET-PASSENGER LINER SUFFERED "A COMPLETE STRUCTURAL FAILURE" IN THE AIR BEFORE CRASHING AND KILLING 43 PERSONS.
HE SAID A PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION DID NOT INDICATE THE FAILURE WAS DUE TO POOR CONSTRUCTION OR WORKMANSHIP, BUT THROUGH THE JET HITTING A "FAIRLY HEAVY BODY."
HE DID NOT INDICATE WHAT THE BODY MIGHT HAVE BEEN, BUT RULED OUT THE POSSIBILITY IT WAS ANOTHER PLANE OR THAT THE JET HAD BEEN STRUCK BY LIGHTNING.
FM238P
PHOTOSTATIC COPY OF ORIGINAL U. P. TELETYPE
WOOD

WAS THIS "FAIRLY HEAVY BODY" A FLYING SAUCER?

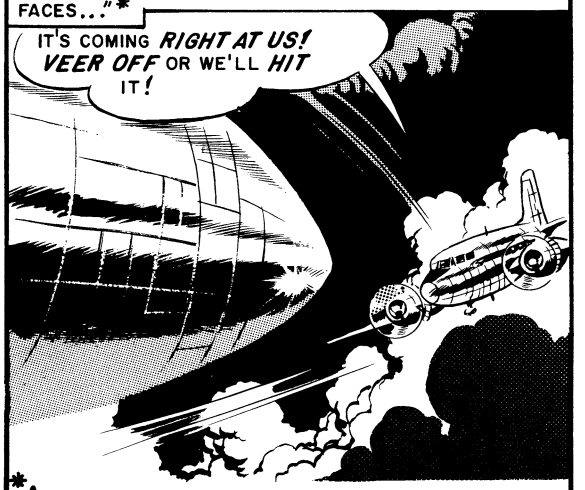
The EASTERN AIR LINES CASE

PROJECT SAUCER CASE NO. 144

IN THE *OFFICIAL REPORT* OF THE STUDIES MADE BY *AIR MATERIEL COMMAND, WRIGHT FIELD, DAYTON, OHIO,* IN ITS *"PROJECT SAUCER"*, THIS CASE WAS TERMED THE MOST "FANTASTIC SAUCER SIGHTING IN TECHNICAL INTELLIGENCE RECORDS." ON JULY 24, 1948, AT 2:45 A.M., CAPTAIN C.S. CHILES AND FIRST OFFICER JOHN B. WHITTED WERE FLYING NEAR MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA, WHEN A BRILLIANT, CIGAR-SHAPED CRAFT CAME HURTLING TOWARD THEM.

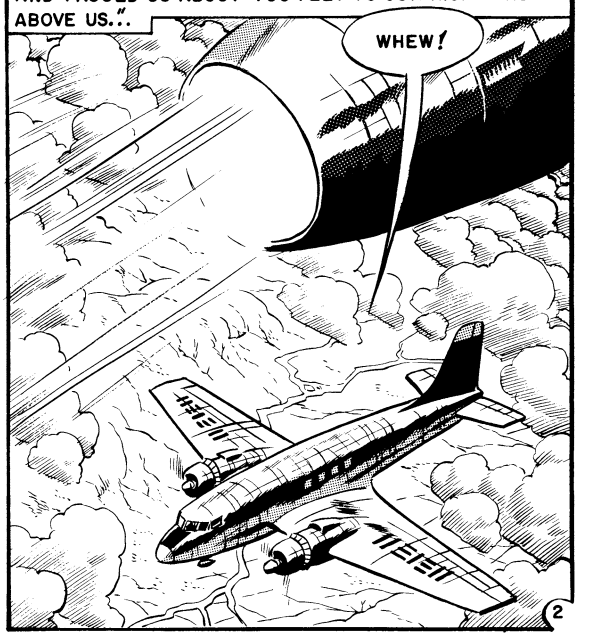


"WHATEVER IT WAS," CAPTAIN CHILES LATER TOLD 'PROJECT SAUCER' INVESTIGATORS, "IT FLASHED DOWN TOWARD US (HEADING SOUTHWEST)... A WINGLESS AIRCRAFT, 100 FEET LONG, CIGAR SHAPED, AND ABOUT TWICE THE DIAMETER OF A B-29 WITH NO PROTRUDING SURFACES..."*

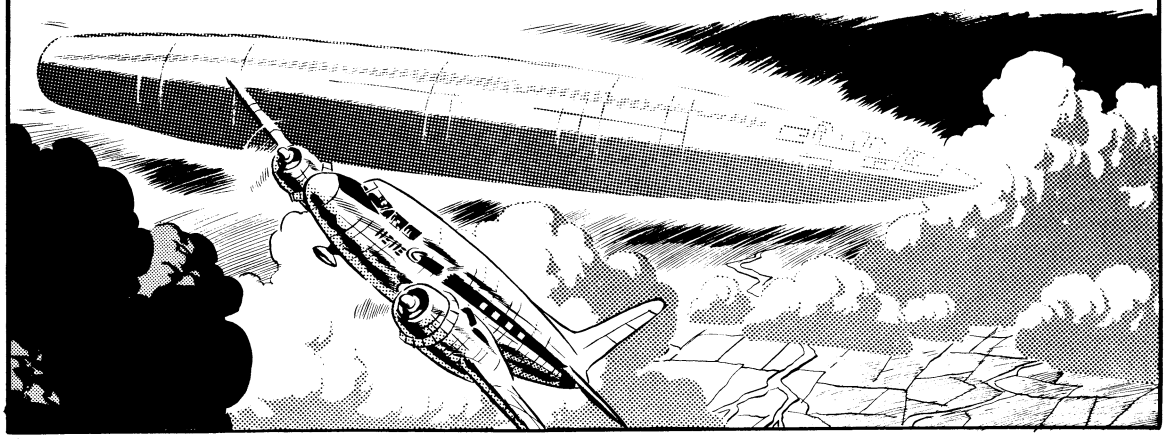


*ALL STATEMENTS IN QUOTES ARE OFFICIAL VERBATIM REMARKS AS PRINTED IN THIS OFFICIAL REPORT--EDS...

"...WE VEERED TO OUR LEFT. IT VEERED TO ITS LEFT AND PASSED US ABOUT 700 FEET TO OUR RIGHT AND ABOVE US..."



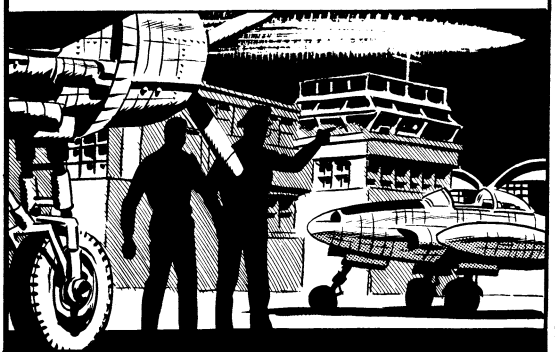
CHILES THEN WENT ON TO DESCRIBE THE OBJECT. HE SAID THE CABIN "APPEARED LIKE A PILOT COMPARTMENT, ONLY BRIGHTER." HE SAID THE ILLUMINATION INSIDE APPROXIMATED THE BRILLIANCE OF A MAGNESIUM FLARE. "WE SAW NO OCCUPANTS. FROM THE SIDE OF THE CRAFT CAME AN INTENSE, FAIRLY DARK BLUE GLOW THAT RAN THE ENTIRE LENGTH OF THE FUSELAGE... LIKE A BLUE FLUORESCENT FACTORY LIGHT..."



"THE EXHAUST WAS A RED-ORANGE FLAME." CHILES SAID IT EXTENDED 30 TO 50 FEET BEHIND THE OBJECT. "THEN," CHILES CONTINUED, "AS IF THE PILOT HAD SEEN US AND WANTED TO AVOID US, IT PULLED UP WITH A TREMENDOUS BURST OF FLAME FROM THE REAR..."

"...AND ZOOMED INTO THE CLOUDS, ITS PROP WASH OR JET WASH ROCKING OUR D.C.3..."

THIS SAME "SPACE SHIP," THE REPORT STATED, WAS ALSO "SEEN BY GROUND OBSERVERS AT ROBBINS AIR FORCE BASE, MACON, GEORGIA (APPROXIMATELY ONE HOUR EARLIER)* GOING IN A SOUTHERLY DIRECTION, TRAILING VARIED-COLORED FLAMES..."



*THIS IS IMPORTANT! — EDS.

THE REPORT THEN WENT ON TO APPLY THE *PRANDTL THEORY OF LIFT* TO THE INCIDENT, INDICATING THAT... "A *FUSELAGE* OF THE *DIMENSIONS* REPORTED BY CHILES AND WHITTED *COULD* SUPPORT A LOAD COMPARABLE TO THE WEIGHT OF AN AIRCRAFT OF THIS SIZE AT FLYING SPEEDS IN THE SUB-SONIC RANGE." THE REPORT THEN CONCLUDED...

"THE OBJECT IS STILL CONSIDERED 'UNIDENTIFIED.'"

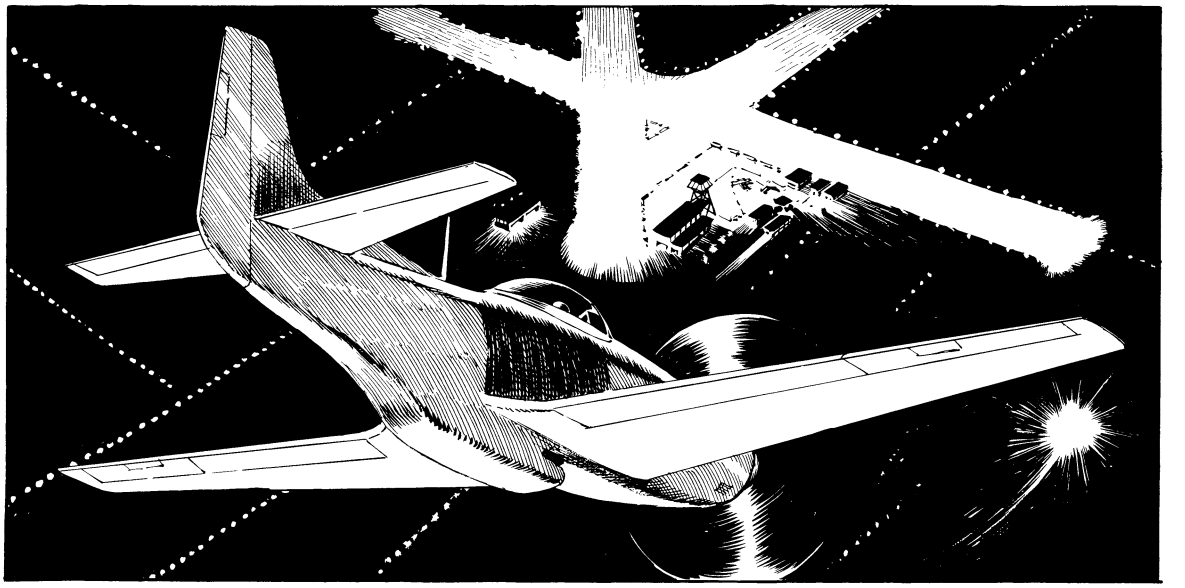
THIS "PROJECT SAUCER REPORT" WAS MADE ON *APRIL 27, 1949.* YET IN *DECEMBER* OF THAT *SAME YEAR, MAJOR JERE BOGGS, A PROJECT INTELLIGENCE OFFICER,* STATED TO THE INTERNATIONAL NEWS SERVICE...

WHY DID PROJECT SAUCER CHANGE ITS MIND?

3

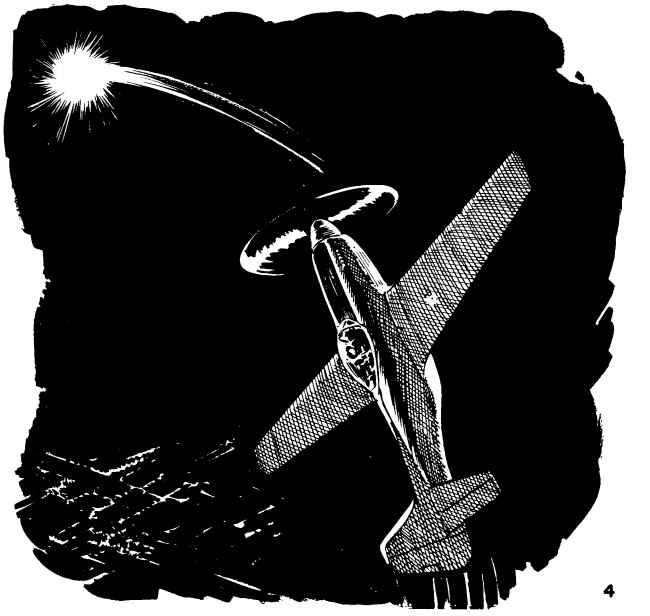
The GORMAN-FARGO, N.D., CASE

THE APRIL, 1949 'PROJECT SAUCER' REPORT ALSO STATED: "A UNIQUE CHAPTER IN THE SAUCER STORY WAS WRITTEN LAST OCTOBER BY LT. GEORGE F. GORMAN OF THE NORTH DAKOTA (AIR) NATIONAL GUARD WHO SAID HE HAD A 27-MINUTE DOGFIGHT WITH A FLYING SAUCER IN THE SKIES OVER FARGO. ON THE NIGHT OF OCTOBER 1, 1948, HE(GORMAN) WAS PREPARING TO LAND AT THE FARGO AIRPORT AFTER A ROUTINE F-51 PATROL. CLEARED BY THE TOWER TO LAND, GORMAN NOTICED WHAT APPEARED TO BE THE TAILLIGHT OF ANOTHER PLANE ABOUT ONE THOUSAND YARDS AWAY..."



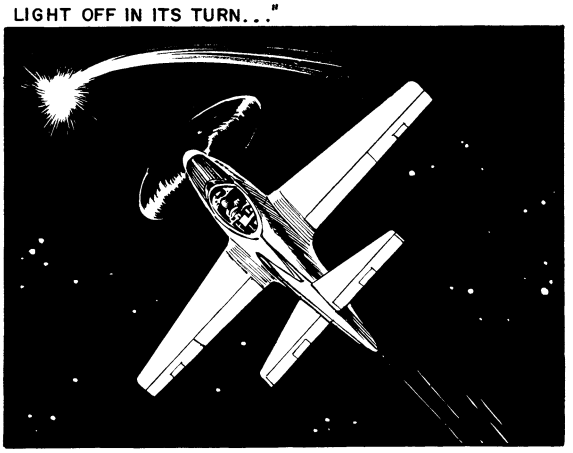
"HE QUERIED THE TOWER AND WAS TOLD THAT THE ONLY OTHER AIRCRAFT OVER THE FIELD WAS A PIPER CUB, WHICH HE COULD SEE OUTLINED BELOW HIM. HE SAW NO OUTLINE OF ANYTHING AROUND THE MOVING LIGHT. GORMAN CLOSED IN TO TAKE A LOOK AT THE MYSTERY LIGHT..."

GORMAN TOLD 'PROJECT SAUCER' INVESTIGATORS: "IT WAS ABOUT SIX TO EIGHT INCHES IN DIAMETER, CLEAR WHITE AND COMPLETELY ROUND... AS I APPROACHED, THE LIGHT... PULLED INTO A SHARP LEFT BANK. I DIVED AFTER IT AND BROUGHT MY MANIFOLD PRESURE UP TO 60 INCHES..."

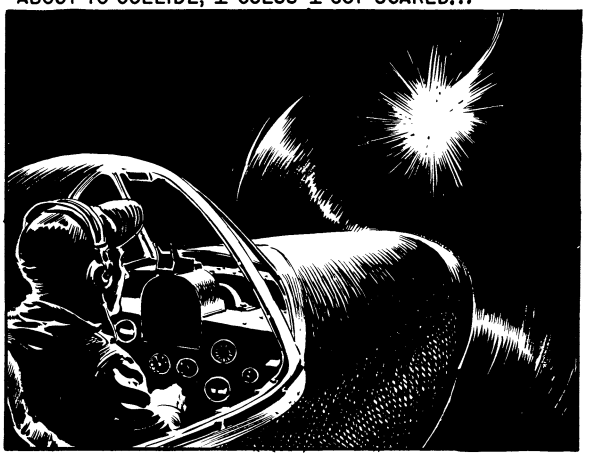


4

"...BUT I COULDN'T CATCH THE THING. IT STARTED GAINING ALTITUDE AND MADE A LEFT BANK. I PUT MY F-51 INTO A SHARP TURN AND TRIED TO CUT THE LIGHT OFF IN ITS TURN..."



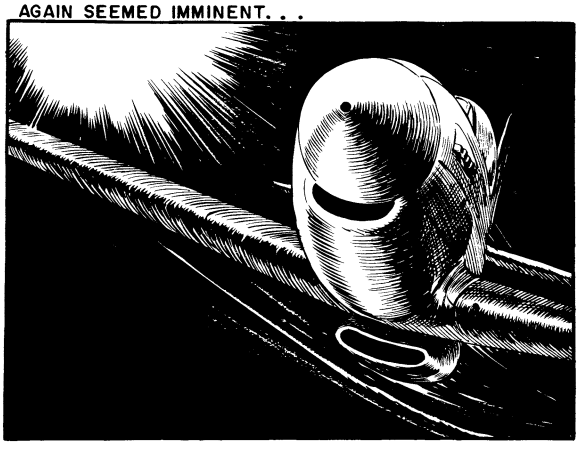
"SUDDENLY, IT MADE A SHARP RIGHT TURN, AND WE HEADED STRAIGHT AT EACH OTHER. JUST WHEN WE WERE ABOUT TO COLLIDE, I GUESS I GOT SCARED..."



"I WENT INTO A DIVE, AND THE LIGHT PASSED OVER MY CANOPY..."

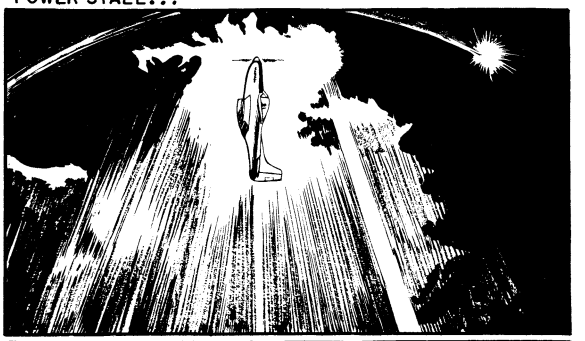
"THEN IT MADE A LEFT CIRCLE ABOUT 1000 FEET ABOVE, AND I GAVE CHASE AGAIN..."

IN THE OFFICIAL REPORT, GORMAN WENT ON TO DESCRIBE HOW HE CUT SHARPLY TOWARD THE LIGHT, WHICH WAS ONCE MORE COMING AT HIM. AND THEN, WHEN COLLISION AGAIN SEEMED IMMINENT...



"THE OBJECT SHOT STRAIGHT UP INTO THE AIR..."

THE REPORT WENT ON: "GORMAN CLIMBED AFTER IT TO 14,000, AGAIN IN CHASE, WHEN HIS PLANE WENT INTO A POWER STALL..."



"THE OBJECT TURNED IN A NORTHWEST NORTH HEADING AND DISAPPEARED..."

THE REPORT THEN STATED: "THE MYSTERY LIGHT WAS ALSO SEEN BY L.D. JENSEN, AIRPORT TRAFFIC CONTROLLER AT FARGO, WHO WATCHED IT WITH A PAIR OF BINOCULARS..."

GORMAN, WHO WAS A PILOT INSTRUCTOR FOR FRENCH AIR CADETS DURING WORLD WAR II, SAID IN A CERTIFIED STATEMENT...

I AM CONVINCED THERE WAS *THOUGHT* BEHIND THE MANEUVERS. I AM ALSO CONVINCED THAT THE OBJECT WAS GOVERNED BY THE LAWS OF *INERTIA* BECAUSE ITS ACCELERATION WAS *RAPID* BUT *NOT IMMEDIATE*, AND, ALTHOUGH IT WAS ABLE TO TURN FAIRLY *TIGHT* AT CONSIDERABLE SPEED, IT STILL FOLLOWED A *NATURAL CURVE*.

THE OBJECT COULD *OUT-TURN* AND *OUTSPEED* THE F-51 (300-400 MPH) AND WAS ABLE TO ATTAIN A *MUCH STEEPER CLIMB* AND TO *MAINTAIN* A *CONSTANT* RATE OF CLIMB FAR IN *EXCESS* OF THE *AIR FORCE FIGHTER*. WHEN I ATTEMPTED TO TURN *WITH* THE OBJECT, I *BLACKED OUT TEMPORARILY*, DUE TO EXCESS SPEED...

THE REPORT THEN CONCLUDED WITH THIS QUESTION:

"IS IT POSSIBLE FOR AN OBJECT WITHOUT APPRECIABLE SHAPE OR KNOWN AERONAUTICAL CONFIGURATION TO APPEAR TO TRAVEL AT VARIABLE SPEEDS, AND MANEUVER INTELLIGENTLY?"*

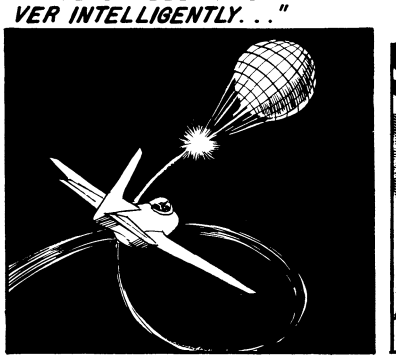
**REMEMBER THIS!* IT'S *IMPORTANT!* THE REPORT *DID NOT ATTEMPT TO EXPLAIN* GORMAN'S SIGHTING ... MERELY POSED THIS PROVOKING *QUESTION* CONSIDERING THE *FACTS* OF THE CASE...

YET, MAJOR JERE BOGGS, IN HIS I.N.S. INTERVIEW, STATED...

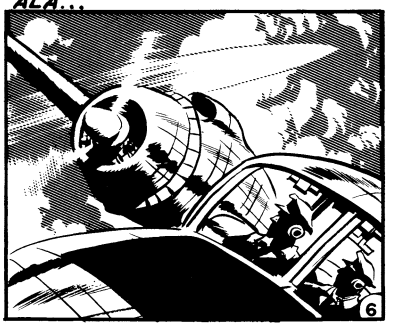
LIEUTENANT GORMAN WAS *CHASING* A *LIGHTED BALLOON!*

***AGAIN* PROJECT SAUCER HAD CHANGED ITS MIND!**

SO *LT. GEORGE F. GORMAN*, A *VETERAN PILOT* DEEMED CAPABLE ENOUGH TO *INSTRUCT OTHERS*, HAD CHASED A *LIGHTED BALLOON* THAT COULD "*TRAVEL AT VARIABLE SPEEDS AND MANEUVER INTELLIGENTLY...*"



AND EASTERN AIR LINES PILOTS *CHILES* AND *WHITTED*, VETERAN PILOTS DEEMED CAPABLE ENOUGH TO BE *TRUSTED* WITH THE *LIVES* OF *PASSENGERS*, SAW A *METEOR* THAT TOOK *ONE HOUR* TO TRAVEL FROM *MACON, GA.* TO *MONTGOMERY, ALA...*

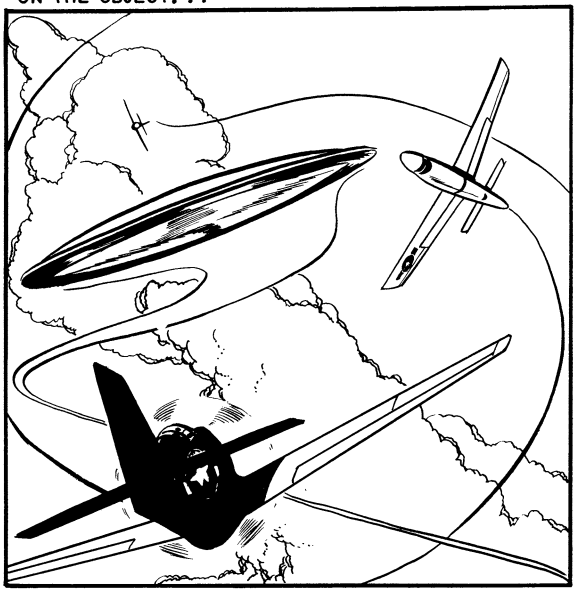


The MANTELL-GODMAN CASE

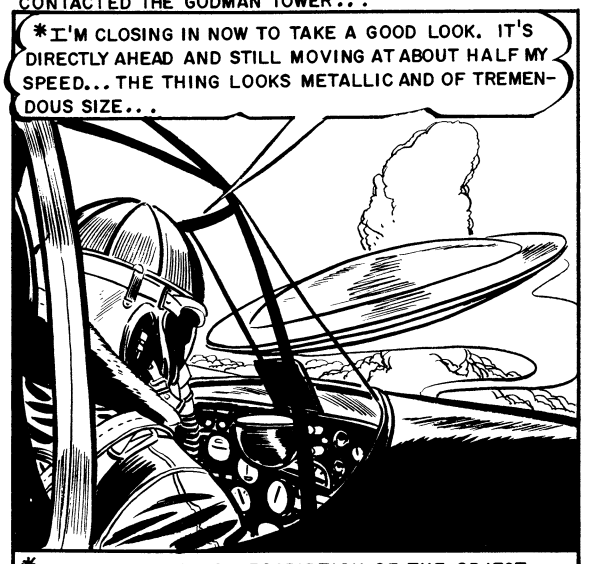
PROJECT SAUCER CASE NUMBER 33

THE PROJECT SAUCER REPORT OF APRIL 27, 1949 MOURNED: "TRAGEDY STRUCK AT THE FLYING SAUCER STORY EARLY IN 1948. ON JANUARY 7TH, AN UNIDENTIFIED OBJECT...WAS SIGHTED OVER GODMAN AIR FORCE BASE, FT. KNOX, KENTUCKY, BY SEVERAL MILITARY AND CIVILIAN OBSERVERS..."

"THE GODMAN TOWER REQUESTED A FLIGHT OF FOUR NATIONAL GUARD F-51'S IN THE VICINITY TO INVESTIGATE THE PHENOMENA. THREE OF THE PLANES CLOSED IN ON THE OBJECT..."



"THE FLIGHT LEADER, CAPTAIN THOMAS F. MANTELL, CONTACTED THE GODMAN TOWER..."


*I'M CLOSING IN NOW TO TAKE A GOOD LOOK. IT'S DIRECTLY AHEAD AND STILL MOVING AT ABOUT HALF MY SPEED... THE THING LOOKS METALLIC AND OF TREMENDOUS SIZE...

*PLEASE NOTE THIS DESCRIPTION OF THE OBJECT WHICH ALL THREE PLANES "CLOSED IN ON." IT'S IMPORTANT...-EDS.

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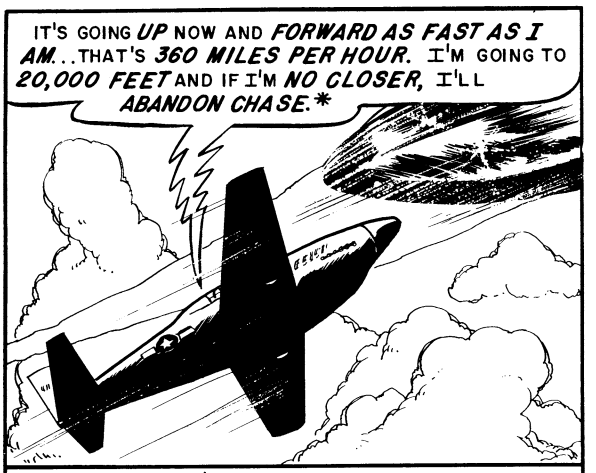
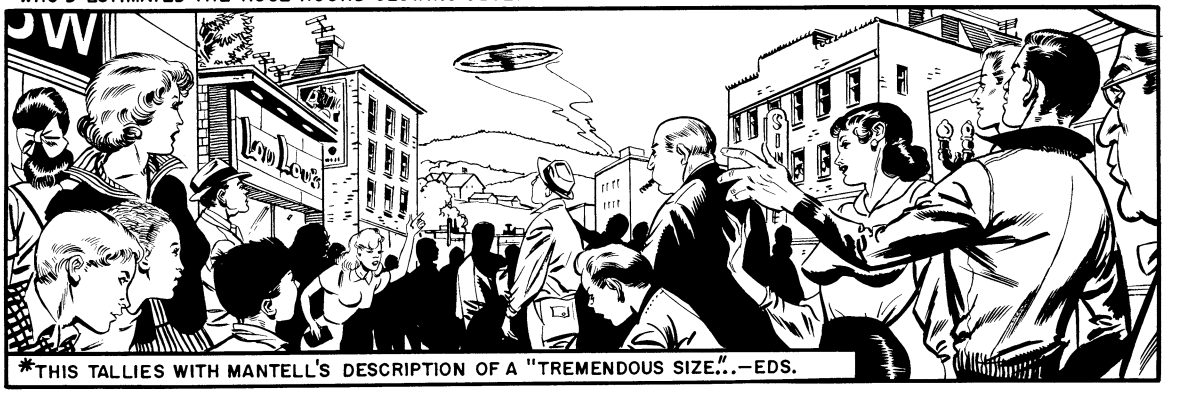

IT'S GOING *UP* NOW AND *FORWARD AS FAST AS I AM*...THAT'S *360 MILES PER HOUR*. I'M GOING TO *20,000 FEET* AND IF I'M *NO CLOSER*, I'LL *ABANDON CHASE*.*

*CAPTAIN MANTELL'S WORDS ARE VERBATIM OFFICIAL QUOTES FROM THE APRIL REPORT...–EDS.

THE REPORT WENT ON: "THE TIME WAS 1515 HOURS. THAT WAS THE LAST RADIO CONTACT MADE BY MANTELL WITH THE GODMAN TOWER. LATER THAT DAY, THEY FOUND HIS BODY IN THE WRECKAGE OF HIS PLANE NEAR FT. KNOX, . . ."

THIS FLYING SAUCER, INCIDENTALLY, WAS ALSO SEEN BY HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE AT NEARBY MADISONVILLE, KENTUCKY, AND LATER BY THOUSANDS THROUGHOUT THE STATE. FT. KNOX HAD BEEN ALERTED BY STATE POLICE WHO'D ESTIMATED THE HUGE ROUND GLOWING OBJECT WAS AT LEAST 250 FEET IN DIAMETER. . .*



*THIS TALLIES WITH MANTELL'S DESCRIPTION OF A "TREMENDOUS SIZE"..–EDS.

THE OFFICIAL REPORT CONCLUDED WITH:

"THE MYSTERIOUS OBJECT WHICH THE FLYER CHASED TO HIS DEATH WAS *FIRST* IDENTIFIED AS THE PLANET VENUS. HOWEVER, FURTHER PROBING SHOWED THE ELEVATION AND AZIMUTH READINGS OF VENUS AND THE OBJECT AT SPECIFIED TIME INTERVALS *DID NOT COINCIDE*.

IT IS STILL CONSIDERED 'UNIDENTIFIED'."

THIS, FROM THE APRIL 1949 'PROJECT SAUCER' REPORT.

AND YET, AT THE END OF THAT SAME YEAR, WHEN MAJ. JERE BOGGS ANNOUNCED THE ABANDONMENT OF 'PROJECT SAUCER' IN THAT FAMOUS INS INTERVIEW, HE STATED...

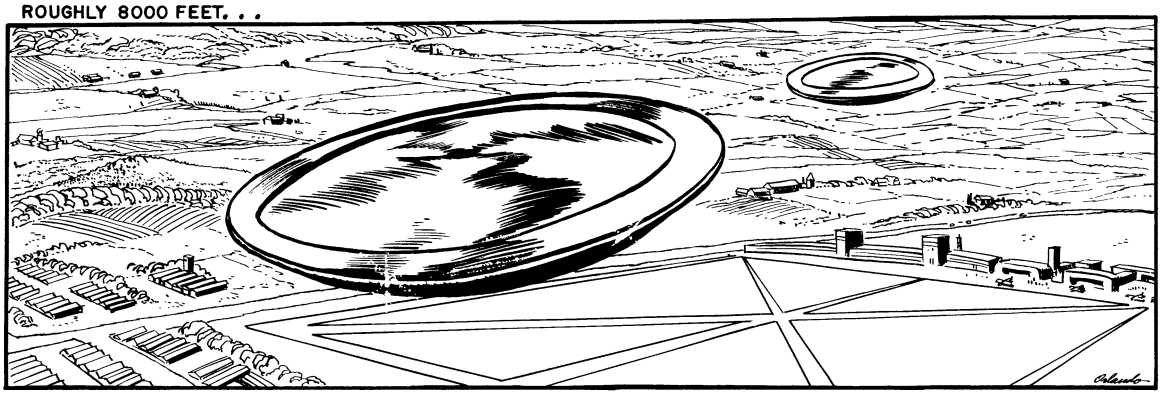
ONCE MORE 'PROJECT SAUCER' HAD REVERSED ITSELF.

THE AIR FORCE EXPECTS US TO BELIEVE THAT *CAPTAIN THOMAS MANTELL*, A *VETERAN PILOT* AND A *FLIGHT LEADER* FOR THE *AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF KENTUCKY*, WAS CHASING *VENUS*, WHICH APPEARS AS A *PINPOINT OF LIGHT* IN THE NIGHT SKY... *NOT* "OF *TREMENDOUS SIZE*"! *AND THIS WAS AT 1515 HOURS...3:15 IN THE AFTERNOON!*...

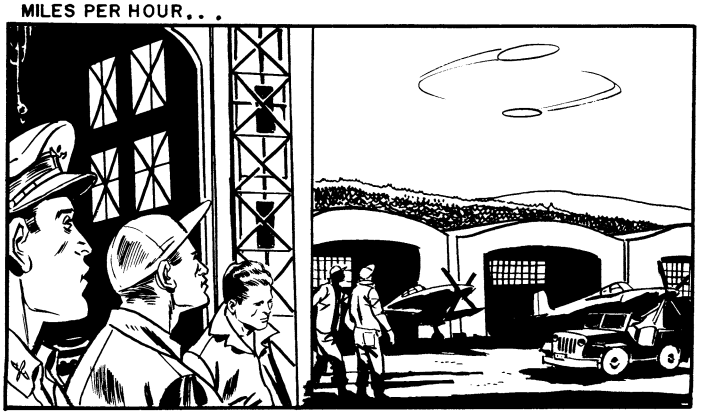
The MUROC AIR FORCE BASE CASE

PROJECT SAUCER CASE NUMBER 1

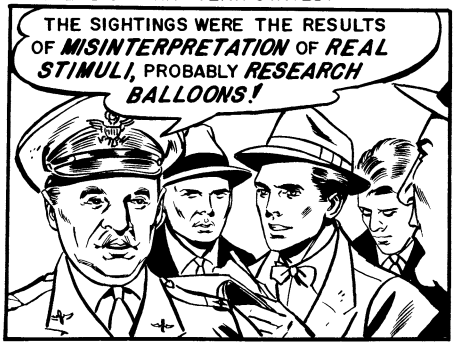
THE 'PROJECT SAUCER' REPORT OF APRIL, '49, MERELY DESCRIBED THE HAPPENINGS OVER MUROC AIR FORCE BASE ON JULY 8, 1947. IT MADE NO ATTEMPT TO EXPLAIN THEM AWAY OR TO DRAW ANY CONCLUSIONS. ON THAT DAY, A GROUP OF AIR FORCE PILOTS AND GROUND OFFICERS WATCHED TWO SILVER-COLORED DISCS MANEUVERING OVERHEAD AT ROUGHLY 8000 FEET. . .



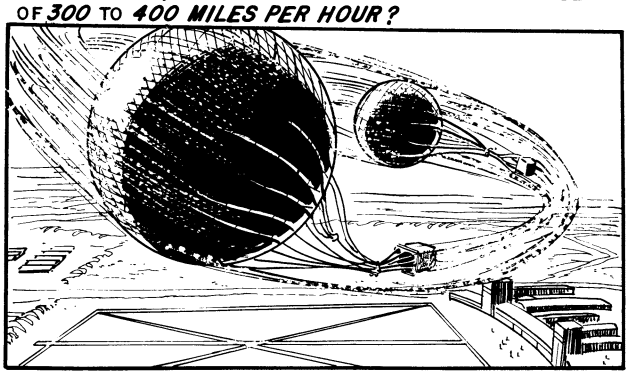
CIRCLING TIGHTLY, THEY REACHED SPEEDS ESTIMATED BY THESE TRAINED AND COMPETENT OBSERVERS AT BETWEEN 300 AND 400 MILES PER HOUR. . .



WHEN PROJECT SAUCER INVESTIGATORS FAILED TO ANALYZE AND EXPLAIN THIS SIGHTING IN THEIR APRIL '49 REPORT, AIR MATERIEL COMMAND AT WRIGHT FIELD AT THE END OF THAT YEAR STATED:



THIS IS THE MOST INCREDIBLE EXPLANATION OF THEM ALL! ARE WE SUPPOSED TO *BELIEVE* THAT RESEARCH BALLOONS, *UNMANNED* AND *UNPOWERED*, COULD HAVE CIRCLED AT SPEEDS IN *EXCESS* OF *300* TO *400 MILES PER HOUR?*



THAT WOULD HAVE MEANT A *300 M.P.H. WIND* WOULD HAVE BEEN BLOWING...ENOUGH OF A WIND TO HAVE *SUCKED MURAC AND ITS MEN RIGHT OFF THE MAP!...*

THIS* TIME PROJECT SAUCER HAD REVERSED ITSELF INTO *ABSURDITY!

(9)

THE UNITED AIR LINES

EMMETT, IDAHO CASE

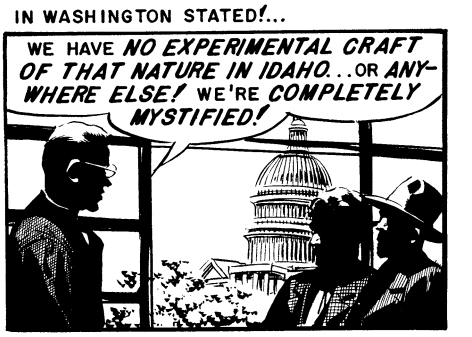
PROJECT SAUCER CASE NO. 10

ON JULY 4TH, 1947, CAPTAIN E.J. SMITH AND FIRST OFFICER RALPH STEVENS WERE FLYING THEIR AIRLINER OVER EMMETT, IDAHO. SUDDENLY, THEY SAW FIVE QUEER OBJECTS IN THE SKY AHEAD. SMITH RANG FOR THE STEWARDESS...

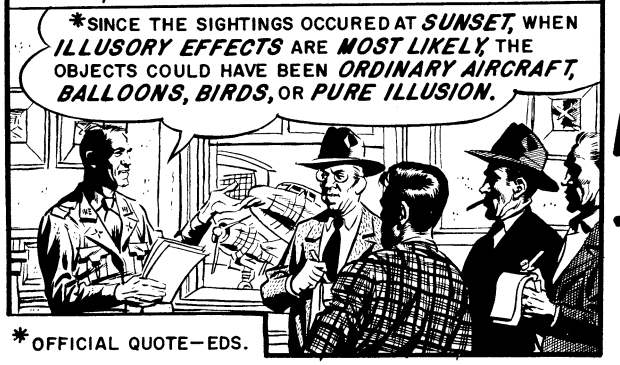
THE STEWARDESS AND THE TWO PILOTS WATCHED THE SAUCERS FOR SEVERAL MINUTES. THEN FOUR MORE DISCS CAME INTO SIGHT...

THE NINE DISCS DISAPPEARED AFTER TEN MINUTES...

THE AIR FORCE QUICKLY DENIED HAVING ANYTHING RESEMBLING THE OBJECTS CAPTAIN SMITH DESCRIBED. AN OFFICIAL IN WASHINGTON STATED!...



YET AIR MATERIEL COMMAND... IGNORING THE EXPERIENCE AND CREDIBILITY OF THESE WITNESSES... IN THEIR CONCERTED EFFORT TO EXPLAIN AWAY ALL CASES AT THE END OF 1949, SAID...


*SINCE THE SIGHTINGS OCCURED AT SUNSET, WHEN ILLUSORY EFFECTS ARE MOST LIKELY, THE OBJECTS COULD HAVE BEEN ORDINARY AIRCRAFT, BALLOONS, BIRDS, OR PURE ILLUSION.

*OFFICIAL QUOTE—EDS.

WHAT HAD HAPPENED BETWEEN APRIL 27, 1949

(THE FIRST PROJECT SAUCER REPORT)

AND DECEMBER 27, 1949

(THE FINAL PROJECT SAUCER REPORT)

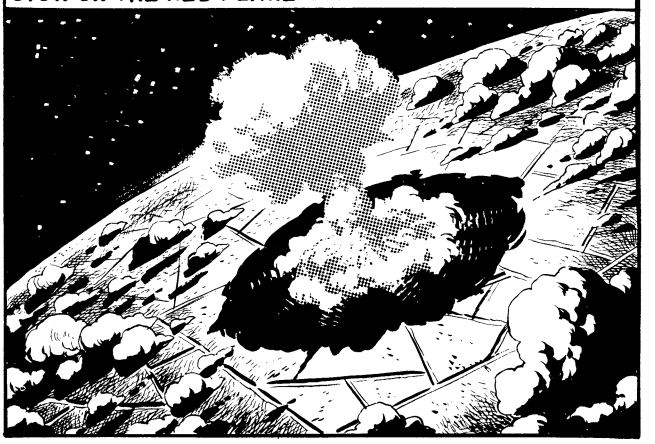
TO MAKE THE AIR FORCE CHANGE ITS TUNE?

10

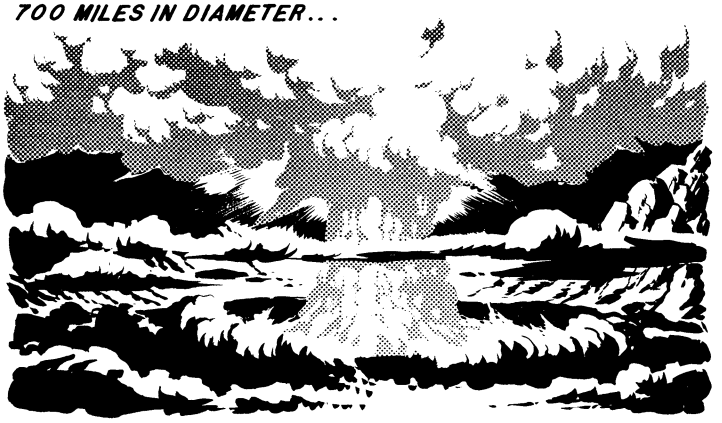
WAS THIS THE ANSWER?

ON *DECEMBER 9, 1949,* THE NOTED JAPANESE ASTRONOMER, *TSUNEO SAHEKI,* WHO HAS *SPECIALIZED* IN OBSERVING *MARS* SINCE *1933,* WAS AT HIS TELESCOPE...

SUDDENLY, SAHEKI REPORTED, *HE SAW A GIGANTIC EXPLOSION ON THE RED PLANET...*



ACCORDING TO SAHEKI, THE EXPLOSION CAUSED A *BRILLIANT GLOW FOR SEVERAL MINUTES.* THIS WAS FOLLOWED BY A *LUMINOUS YELLOW-GREYISH CLOUD* ESTIMATED AT *40 MILES HIGH* AND *700 MILES IN DIAMETER...*



AFTER RULING OUT ALL OTHER EXPLANATIONS, SAHEKI STATED:

IT WAS *UNDOUBTEDLY* AN *ARTIFICIAL ATOMIC EXPLOSION...* EVEN *MORE POWERFUL* THAN THE *H-BOMB...* THAT COULD *ONLY* HAVE BEEN SET OFF BY *HIGHLY ADVANCED BEINGS...*

WAS IT *TSUNEO SAHEKI'S OBSERVATION* AND *REPORT* THAT *CONVINCED* THE AIR FORCE THAT IT *HAD* TO REVERSE ITS STAND? DID IT NOW FEAR *PANIC* IF IT TOLD THE TRUTH. . . THE *KIND* OF HYSTERICAL PANIC CREATED BY *ORSON WELLES* WHEN HIS FAMOUS *"MARTIAN INVASION" BROADCAST* BROUGHT PEOPLE *SCREAMING* FROM THEIR HOMES...?

The DEC. 27, 1949 RELEASE

ON DECEMBER 27, 1949, A LITTLE OVER TWO WEEKS AFTER THE SAHEKI OBSERVATION, THE AIR FORCE FLATLY DENIED HAVING ANY EVIDENCE THAT FLYING SAUCERS EXIST. THE RELEASE SAID:

PROJECT SAUCER HAS FOUND THAT FLYING SAUCER SIGHTINGS WERE CAUSED BY: (ONE) *MISINTERPRETATION* OF VARIOUS *CONVENTIONAL OBJECTS;* (TWO) A MILD FORM OF *MASS HYSTERIA* OR "*WAR NERVES*;" AND (THREE) *INDIVIDUALS* WHO *FABRICATE* SUCH REPORTS TO *PERPETRATE A HOAX* OR *SEEK PUBLICITY.*

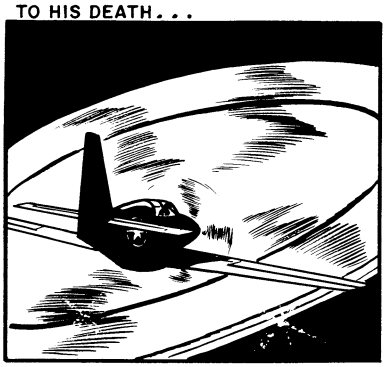
THE RELEASE WENT ON:

EVALUATION OF THE *REPORTS* OF *UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECTS* DEMONSTRATES THAT THEY CONSTITUTE *NO DIRECT THREAT* TO THE NATIONAL SECURITY OF THE UNITED STATES. '*PROJECT SAUCER' IS NOW DISCONTINUED... HAVING EXPLAINED AWAY ALL REPORTS!**

*THIS IN THE FACE OF AND IN DIRECT CONTRADICTION TO THE APRIL 1949 PROJECT SAUCER REPORT.—EDS.

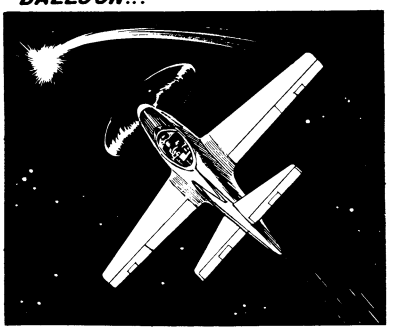
WE WONDER WHAT WERE THE *REACTIONS* OF ALL OF THE *COMPETENT* AND *HONEST PILOTS,* BOTH *AIR FORCE* AND *CIVILIAN,* TO THIS *FINAL SLAMMING OF THE DOOR*...

...OF *CAPT. MANTELL,* IN HIS GRAVE, WHO'D CHASED "*VENUS*" TO HIS DEATH...



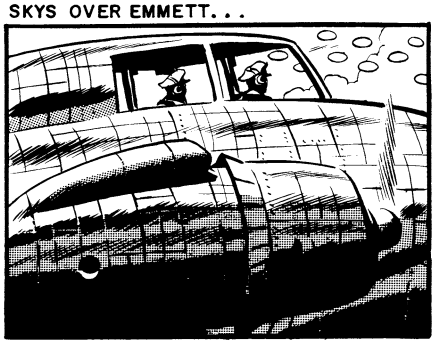
...OF EASTERN'S *CHILES* AND *WHITTED,* WHO'D SEEN A "*COMET*" OR "*BOLLIDE*" WITH *WINDOWS* THAT HAD AVOIDED *HITTING* THEM...

...OF *LT. GORMAN,* WHO'D RACED AROUND THE SKY AFTER AN *INTELLIGENTLY CONTROLLED "BALLOON."*.



...OF THE MEN AT MUROC A.F.B., WHO'D FELT *GENTLE BREEZES* ON THEIR FACES WHILE "RESEARCH BALLOONS" CIRCLED EACH OTHER OVERHEAD IN A 300 M.P.H. WIND...

...OF UNITED'S SMITH AND STEVENS, WHO WATCHED A RENDEZVOUS OF 9 "BALLOONS" OR "BIRDS" OR "PURE ILLUSIONS" IN THE SKYS OVER EMMETT...



WE WONDER HOW *THEY* FELT ABOUT THIS *POOH-POOHING* WHITEWASH! *ONE THING IS CERTAIN! THE FLYING SAUCERS WEREN'T INSULTED! THEY KEPT COMING!*

12

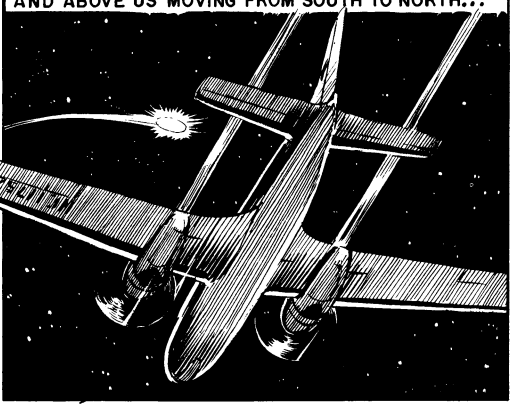
1950 SIGHTINGS

THE CHICAGO AND SOUTHERN AIRLINES—STUTTGART, ARKANSAS SIGHTING

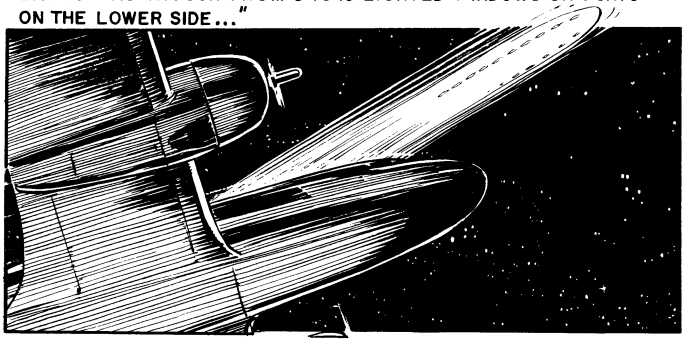
EARLY IN 1950, THE UNITED PRESS CARRIED THIS STORY, TOLD THEM BY TWO CHICAGO AND SOUTHERN AIRLINES PILOTS, CAPTAIN JACK ADAMS AND FIRST OFFICER G.W. ANDERSON. THE DATELINE WAS MARCH 21: "WE WERE HEADED FOR LITTLE ROCK, ABOUT 15 MILES NORTH OF STUTTGART, ARK. VISIBILITY AND CEILING WERE UNLIMITED AND WE COULD SEE 20 OR 30 MILES. WE WERE FLYING AT 2000 FEET. SUDDENLY JACK SAW THIS INTENSE BLINKING LIGHT AT OUR LEFT"...

*ACTUAL QUOTES.—EDS.

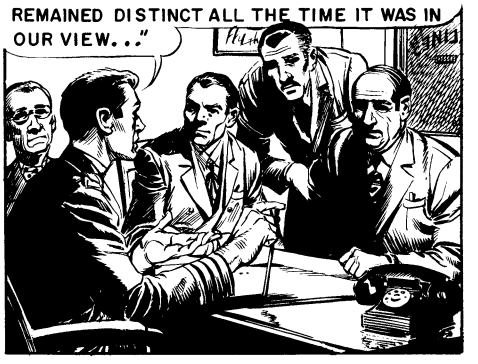
"IT WAS ABOUT 1000 FEET ABOVE US AND ABOUT A HALF-MILE AWAY. IT ZOOMED AT TERRIFIC SPEED — 500 TO 600 MILES AN HOUR— IN AN ARC AHEAD AND ABOVE US MOVING FROM SOUTH TO NORTH..."



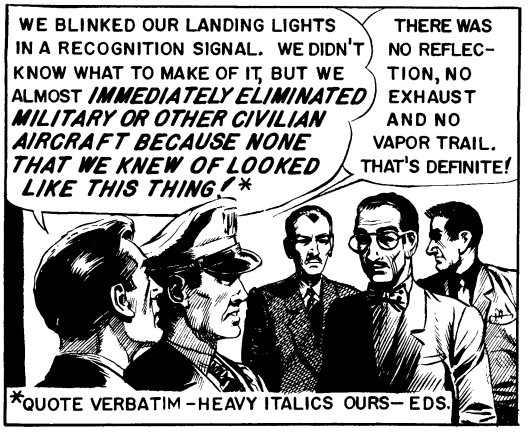
"THE OBJECT REMAINED IN FULL VIEW FOR ABOUT 30 SECONDS AND WE GOT A GOOD LOOK. IT HAD NO NAVIGATION LIGHTS, BUT AS IT PASSED AHEAD OF US IN AN ARC, WE COULD PLAINLY SEE OTHER LIGHTS — AS THOUGH FROM 8 TO 10 LIGHTED WINDOWS OR PORTS— ON THE LOWER SIDE..."



"THE LIGHTS HAD A FLUORESCENT QUALITY. THEY WERE SOFT AND FUZZY, UNLIKE ANY WE'D SEEN BEFORE. THE OBJECT WAS CIRCULAR AND REMAINED DISTINCT ALL THE TIME IT WAS IN OUR VIEW..."

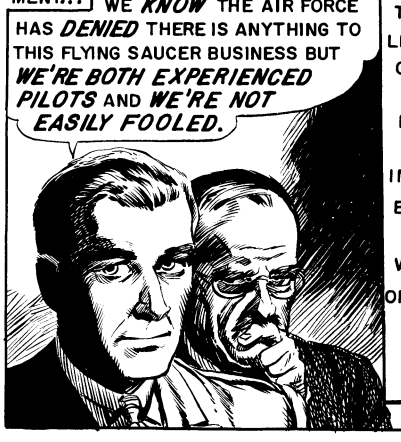


THE U.P. DISPATCH THEN WENT ON TO QUOTE THE TWO FLYERS...


WE BLINKED OUR LANDING LIGHTS IN A RECOGNITION SIGNAL. WE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO MAKE OF IT, BUT WE ALMOST IMMEDIATELY ELIMINATED MILITARY OR OTHER CIVILIAN AIRCRAFT BECAUSE NONE THAT WE KNEW OF LOOKED LIKE THIS THING!*
THERE WAS NO REFLECTION, NO EXHAUST AND NO VAPOR TRAIL. THAT'S DEFINITE!

*QUOTE VERBATIM—HEAVY ITALICS OURS— EDS.

...AND CONCLUDED WITH THIS STATEMENT...


WE KNOW THE AIR FORCE HAS DENIED THERE IS ANYTHING TO THIS FLYING SAUCER BUSINESS BUT WE'RE BOTH EXPERIENCED PILOTS AND WE'RE NOT EASILY FOOLED.

DID YOU ADD *THESE* TWO NAMES TO YOUR LIST OF *MISINTERPRETORS* OR *HYSTERICS* OR *PUBLICITY SEEKERS*, AIR FORCE? OR WAS THIS REPORT FILED AND INVESTIGATED *SECRETLY*, EVEN THOUGH "*PROJECT SAUCER*" WAS *DEAD?* WASN'T IT A FACT THAT ONLY THE *NAME* 'SAUCER' WAS DEAD? HADN'T *PROJECT "GRUDGE"* TAKEN ITS PLACE?

13

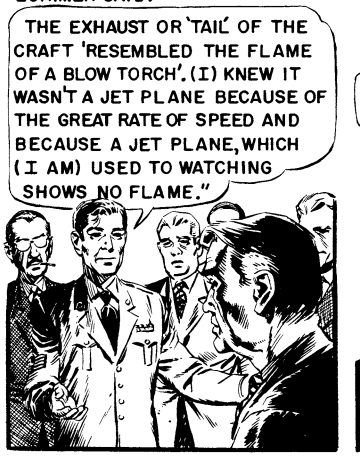
THE 1950 HAMILTON AIR FORCE BASE, CALIFORNIA CASE

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS CARRIED THIS STORY: DATELINE HAMILTON FIELD, CALIFORNIA, JUNE 21, 1950. IT WAS 1:35 A.M. CORPORAL GARLAND PRYOR, 20, WAS IN THE FIELD CONTROL TOWER WITH STAFF SERGEANT ELLIS LORIMER, 25, A VETERAN WITH THREE YEARS EXPERIENCE IN CONTROL TOWER OBSERVATION. SUDDENLY THEY SAW AN OBJECT SPRAYING A BLUE-GREEN STREAK OF FLAME HURTLING TOWARD THEM FROM THE DIRECTION OF THE NEARBY PACIFIC...

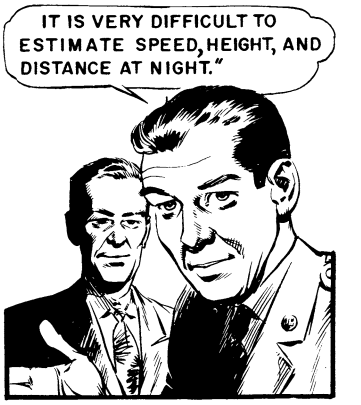
BECAUSE OF THE SPEED AND THE DARKNESS, THEY COULDN'T DISCERN ITS SHAPE. OPPOSITE THE CONTROL TOWER, IN ANOTHER OBSERVATION POST, STAFF SERGEANT VIRGIL CAPPURO, 36, ALSO WATCHED AS THE STRANGE CRAFT MADE THREE SEPARATE PASSES ACROSS THE FIELD...

THE STORY THEN STATED: "*AIR FORCE INTELLIGENCE MEN* QUESTIONED THE THREE OBSERVERS *ALL MORNING*. HEADQUARTERS OF THE FOURTH AIR FORCE HERE HAD NO COMMENT. IT IS SAID A REPORT WAS BEING MADE TO WASHINGTON. OFFICERS WERE TIGHT LIPPED. BUT MAJOR JAMES E. JOHNSTON, PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER, SAID:

"AT WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON'S NEWS CONFERENCE... S/SGT. LORIMER SAID:


THE EXHAUST OR 'TAIL' OF THE CRAFT 'RESEMBLED THE FLAME OF A BLOW TORCH'. (I) KNEW IT WASN'T A JET PLANE BECAUSE OF THE GREAT RATE OF SPEED AND BECAUSE A JET PLANE, WHICH (I AM) USED TO WATCHING SHOWS NO FLAME."

"THE *FIRST* REPORT ON THE MYSTERY (OBJECT) CREDITED IT WITH A SPEED OF '*1000* TO *1500* MILES AN HOUR'. LORIMER WAS ASKED ABOUT THIS. HE SAID:



"(LORIMER) WOULDN'T COMMIT HIMSELF TO A FIGURE. A REPORTER ASKED:

"THE *FIRST* REPORT WEDNESDAY MORNING FROM THE FIELD QUOTED THE OBSERVERS AS SAYING THE OBJECT '*ROARED*' ACROSS THE SKY. BUT AT WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON'S NEWS CONFERENCE THEY SAID:

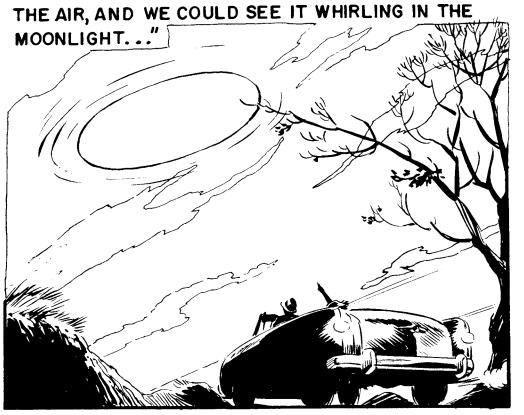
NOTE: PARENTHESES DENOTE WORD-CHANGE OF VERBATIM STORY TO FACILITATE DRAMATIZATION, I.E. THEY (WE). — EDS.

DID YOU ADD *THESE* NAMES TO YOUR EVER-GROWING LIST, AIR FORCE?... MEN WHO'D BEEN DEEMED *TRUSTWORTHY* AND *COMPETENT ENOUGH* TO GUIDE *BILLIONS* OF *DOLLARS* IN *AIRCRAFT* TO *SAFE LANDINGS* AT HAMILTON? DID THE "AIR FORCE *INTELLIGENCE MEN*" WHO "*QUESTIONED* THE THREE OBSERVERS ALL MORNING" *INSTRUCT THEM* TO *CHANGE* THEIR STORIES SO THAT THE *AFTERNOON STATEMENTS* DID NOT *COINCIDE* WITH THE *FIRST MORNING REPORTS*? AND IF SO, *WHY? WHAT DID YOU KNOW THAT YOU DIDN'T WANT US TO KNOW?*

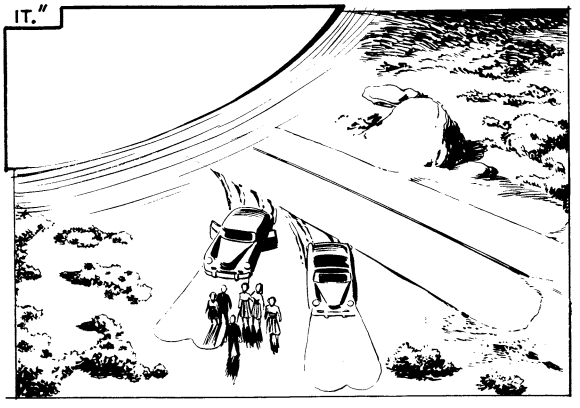
THE REV. ROSS VERMILLION—KINGMAN, KANSAS CASE

A UNITED PRESS DISPATCH DATED JUNE 30,1950 TOLD THE STORY OF A MINISTER AND FORMER AIR FORCE PILOT, WHO SAID HE "SAW A FLYING SAUCER THE SIZE OF A B-29." THE REV. ROSS VERMILLION OF THE CHENEY, KANSAS, CHRISTIAN CHURCH, A WORLD WAR II B-17 PILOT WITH MORE THAN 3000 LOGGED FLYING HOURS, WAS DRIVING ON U.S. 54 ABOUT NINE MILES WEST OF KINGMAN, SHORTLY AFTER MIDNIGHT, WHEN HE SAW A HUGE RED LIGHT IN THE SKY...

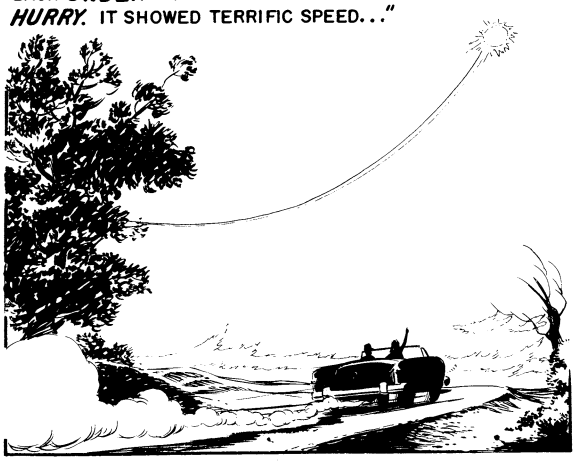
THE REVEREND'S OWN WORDS WERE: "MY WIFE WAS ASLEEP IN THE CAR AND I AWAKENED HER WHEN WE GOT CLOSER. IT WAS ONLY 500 FEET IN THE AIR, AND WE COULD SEE IT WHIRLING IN THE MOONLIGHT..."



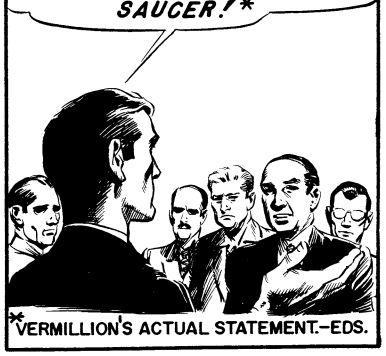
"WE STOPPED THE CAR. A FELLOW MOTORIST CAME ALONG AND WE STOPPED HIM. HE WATCHED IT TOO. FELLOW WAS A DRUGGIST DWAYNE MULNIX OF MEADE, KANSAS. THREE DAUGHTERS WERE WITH HIM AND WE ALL WATCHED IT."



"THEN I DECIDED TO TURN MY CAR AROUND AND DRIVE BACK *UNDER* IT. THAT'S WHEN IT *TOOK OFF IN A HURRY.* IT SHOWED TERRIFIC SPEED..."



I'VE NEVER *SEEN* SUCH *ACCELERATION* IN MY *LIFE.* I'VE SEEN *B-29'S* AT WICHITA AND *F-80 JETS* TESTED ON THE *COAST,* BUT THEY WON'T HOLD A *CANDLE* TO THE ACCELERATION OF THAT *SAUCER!**



*VERMILLION'S ACTUAL STATEMENT.—EDS.

THERE WAS *ANOTHER* MAN WHO ONCE TRIED TO GET *UNDER* A SAUCER. HIS NAME WAS *CAPTAIN THOMAS MANTELL.* THEY FOUND THE *WRECKAGE* OF HIS F-51 HOURS LATER...

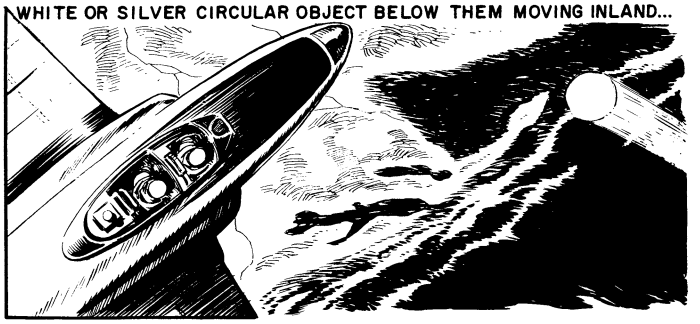
DID THE KINGMAN SAUCER "TAKE OFF IN A HURRY" IN ORDER TO SAVE REVEREND VERMILLION'S LIFE AND AVOID ANOTHER UNFORTUNATE FATAL CONTACT LIKE CAPTAIN MANTELL'S? OR WAS THE REVEREND AND HIS WIFE, MR. MULNIX, AND HIS THREE DAUGHTERS MISINTERPRETING VENUS AS THE AIR FORCE CLAIMED MANTELL HAD DONE?

15

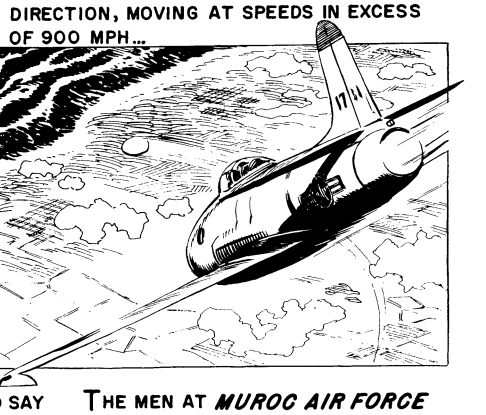
1951 SIGHTINGS

THE ROGERS-BALLARD MITCHELL AIR FORCE BASE CASE

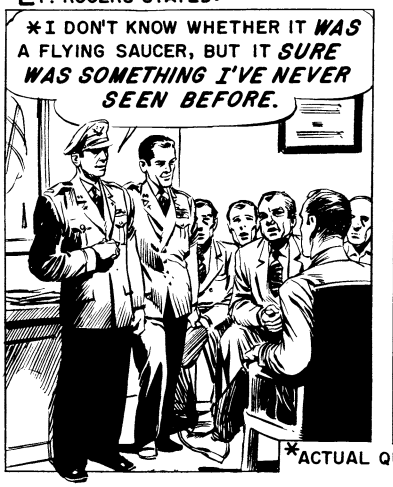
AN ASSOCIATED PRESS DISPATCH, DATELINE MITCHELL AIR FORCE BASE, SEPT. 11, 1951, DESCRIBED THE EXPERIENCE OF LT. WILBERT S. ROGERS, A WORLD WAR II VETERAN, AND HIS PASSENGER IN AT-33 JET TRAINER, CAPTAIN EDWART BALLARD, JR., ON A FLIGHT FROM DOVER TO MITCHELL. WHILE FLYING OVER SANDY HOOK, N.J., AT 450 M.P.H. AT AN ALTITUDE OF 20,000 FEET AT 11:35 A.M., THEY SPOTTED A WHITE OR SILVER CIRCULAR OBJECT BELOW THEM MOVING INLAND...



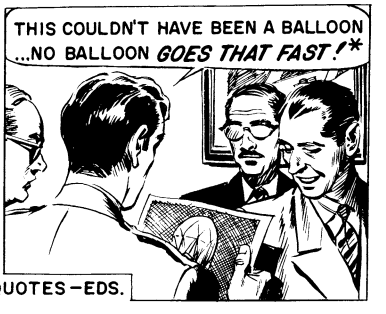
AS THEY FOLLOWED THE OBJECT, IT MOVED IN AN ARC FROM SANDY HOOK TO RED BANK... THEN EAST TO ASBURY PARK ON THE COAST... AND OUT TO SEA IN A SOUTHEASTERLY DIRECTION, MOVING AT SPEEDS IN EXCESS OF 900 MPH...



LT. ROGERS STATED:

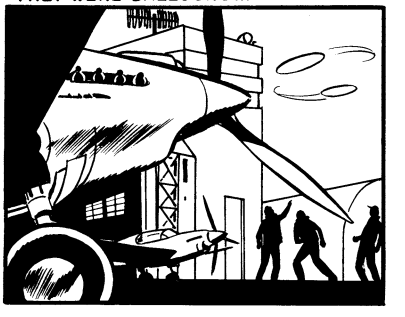


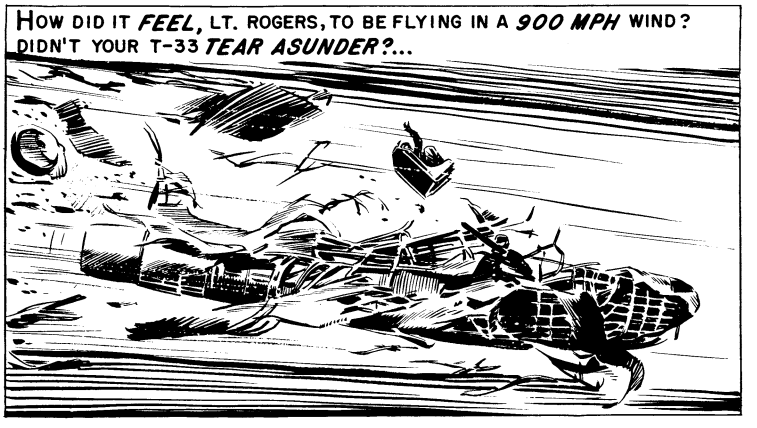
THE STORY THEN WENT ON TO SAY THAT LT. ROGERS "WAS REMINDED THAT VARIOUS UNITS OF THE ARMED FORCES HAVE KNOCKED DOWN REPORTS OF 'FLYING SAUCERS' AND THAT MOST HAVE BEEN EXPLAINED AS WEATHER BALLOONS," LT. ROGERS ANSWERED...



*ACTUAL QUOTES—EDS.

THE MEN AT *MUROC AIR FORCE BASE* IN CALIFORNIA COULD HAVE *ARGUED* WITH YOU, LT. ROGERS. *THEY* SAW *'BALLOONS'* CIRCLING AT SPEEDS ESTIMATED AT BETWEEN *300* AND *400* MILES PER HOUR. AT LEAST THE AIR FORCE *TOLD* THEM THEY WERE BALLOONS...

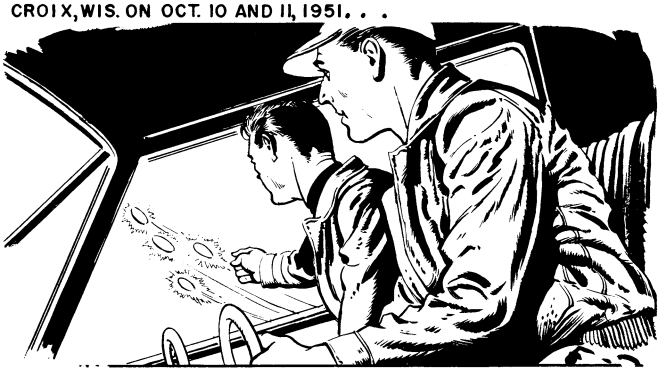




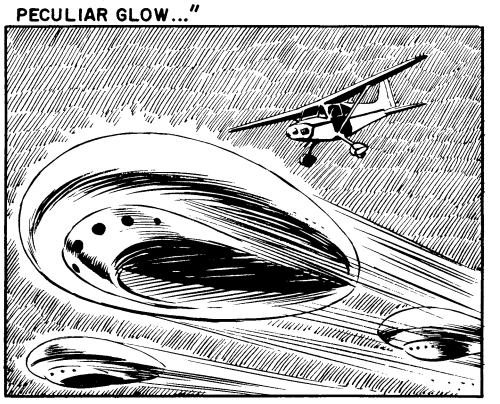
OR WAS THE AIR FORCE'S BALLOON EXPLANATION TORN ASUNDER ONCE MORE WITH YOUR SIGHTING? REMEMBER LT. GORMAN'S 27 MINUTES DOGFIGHT IN THE SKIES OVER FARGO, N.D. WITH A HIGH-SPEED, MANEUVERING THOUGHT-CONTROLLED LIGHTED "BALLOON"! 16

THE KALISZEWSKI-MOORE STATEMENTS

A U.P. DISPATCH, DATELINE, MINNEAPOLIS, MINN, APRIL 12, 1952 CARRIED THE STATEMENTS OF TWO TOP BALLOON EXPERTS. THE STORY WENT LIKE THIS: J.C. KALISZEWSKI, SUPERVISOR OF BALLOON MANUFACTURE FOR GENERAL MILLS, CLAIMED TO HAVE SEEN SEVERAL HIGH-SPEED UNIDENTIFIED OBJECTS WHILE MAKING TWO SEPERATE AIRPLANE TRIPS OVER MINNEAPOLIS AND ST. CROIX, WIS. ON OCT. 10 AND 11, 1951. . .



KALISZEWSKI'S OWN WORDS WERE: "I CAN'T SAY WHETHER THEY WERE SPACE SHIPS, FLYING SAUCERS OR WHAT, BECAUSE I DON'T KNOW. I HAD NEVER SEEN THEM BEFORE. THEY WERE STRANGE, TERRIFICALLY FAST. THEY HAD A PECULIAR GLOW..."



KALISZEWSKI WAS IN A PLANE TRACING A BALLOON FLIGHT WHEN HE SAW THE OBJECTS. HE WENT ON TO STATE:

*WE SAW NO VAPOR TRAIL, AND FROM PAST EXPERIENCE I KNOW THAT THIS THING WAS ***NOT A BALLOON,*** JET, CONVENTIONAL AIRCRAFT OR CELESTIAL STAR...

*ACTUAL QUOTE—EDS.

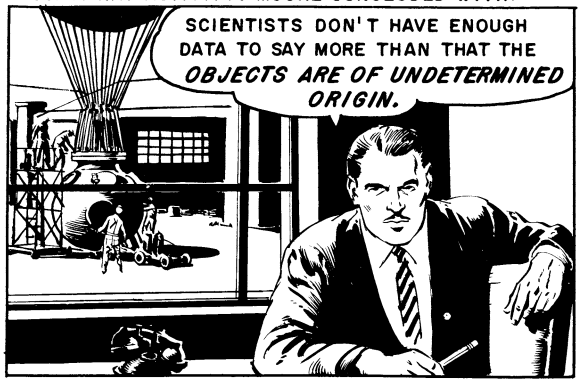
GROUND CREWMEN AT THE GENERAL MILLS TRACKING STATION, DOUG SMITH AND RICHARD DORIAN, BOTH CONFIRMED SIGHTING THE OBJECTS (WHILE KALISZEWSKI WAS IN THE AIR) IN A THEODOLITE*.

*A TELESCOPE-LIKE MEASURING DEVICE—EDS.

CHARLES B. MOORE, AN AERONAUTICAL ENGINEER IN CHARGE OF BALLOON OPERATIONS FOR GENERAL MILLS, URGED...

THE GOVERNMENT OUGHT TO ***STOP DEPENDING*** ON ***CHANCE OBSERVERS*** AND SET UP A ***24-HOUR*** WATCH UNTIL THESE STRANGE OBJECTS ARE ***IDENTIFIED.*** THEY'VE BEEN SEEN AT LEAST ***20 TIMES*** BY PERSONNEL WORKING WITH THE FIRM'S BALLOON OPERATION.

INCIDENTLY, ***GENERAL MILLS,*** WORKING ON ***ARMED FORCES CONTRACTS,*** WAS AT THAT TIME ATTEMPTING TO CONSTRUCT A ***BALLOON*** CAPABLE OF RISING 100,000 FEET IN THE AIR WITH INSTRUMENTS SENSITIVE TO COSMIC RAY ACTIVITY. MOORE CONCLUDED WITH:



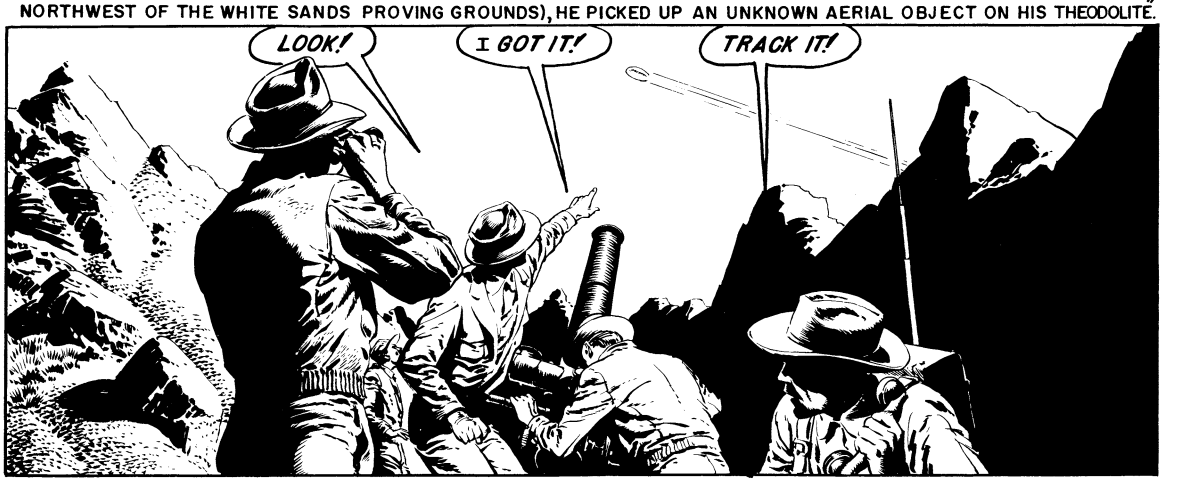
J.C. KALISZEWSKI AND C.B. MOORE WERE *EXPERTS* IN THE FIELD OF *BALLOON RESEARCH.*

THE AIR FORCE'S BALLOON EXPLANATION WAS NOW A *COMPLETE BUST!* 17

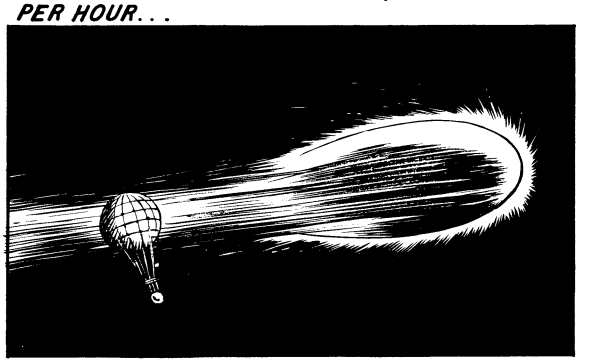
FOOTNOTE ON C. B. MOORE

PROJECT SAUCER CASE NO. 122

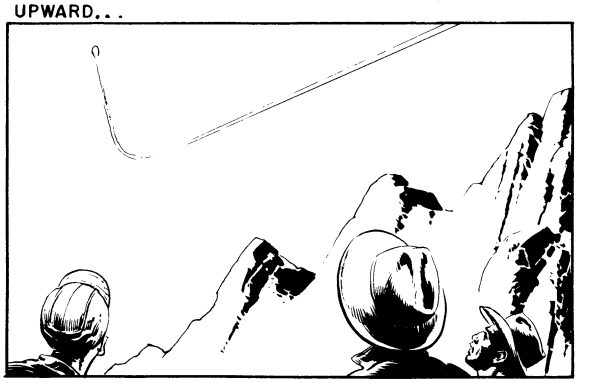
CHARLES B. MOORE, THIS SAME U. P. DISPATCH INFORMED US, WAS "THE MAN WHO FIRST GAVE SCIENTIFIC CREDENCE TO THE 'FLYING SAUCER.' WHILE MAKING BALLOON TESTS 18 MILES SOUTH OF HOT SPRINGS, NEW MEXICO (57 MILES NORTHWEST OF THE WHITE SANDS PROVING GROUNDS), HE PICKED UP AN UNKNOWN AERIAL OBJECT ON HIS THEODOLITE.



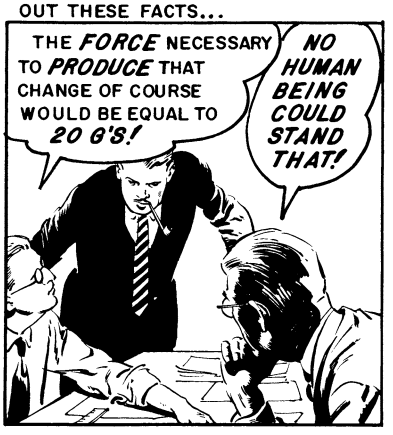
THE OBJECT WAS ELLIPTICAL IN SHAPE, ABOUT 100 FEET IN DIAMETER. IT CROSSED THE PATH OF THE BALLOON AT AN ALTITUDE OF OVER 50 MILES. IT WAS TRACKED AT 5 MILES PER SECOND...THAT'S *18,000 MILES PER HOUR...*



THERE WERE FIVE TRAINED, HIGHLY-SKILLED, SCIENTISTS PRESENT. THE DATE WAS APRIL 14, 1949. THESE MEN WATCHED THE SAUCER ALTER ITS COURSE AND ZOOM UPWARD...



CLOSE QUESTIONING OF MOORE AND THE OTHER OBSERVERS BROUGHT OUT THESE FACTS...



THE U.P. STORY CONCLUDES WITH THIS STATEMENT BY CHARLES B. MOORE...

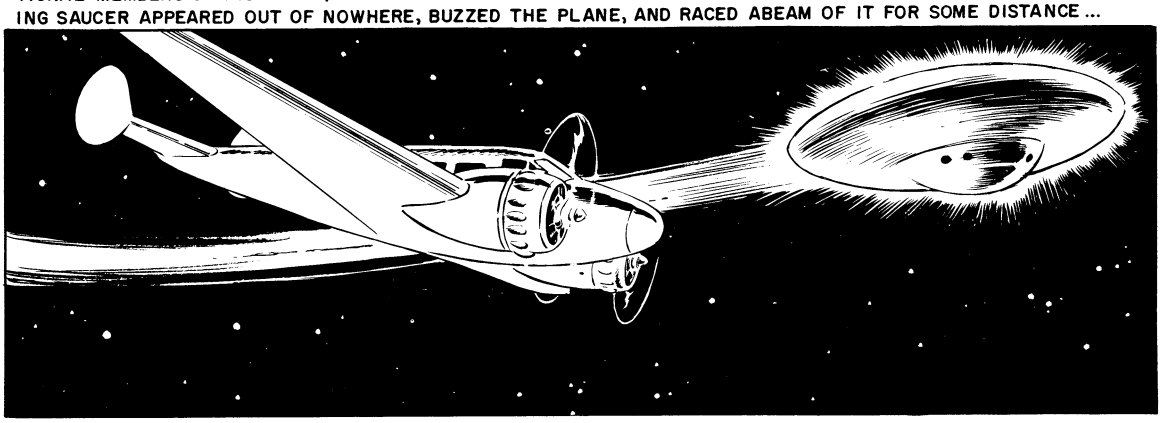
DIDN'T THE AIR FORCE TAKE KALISZEWSKI'S AND MOORE'S ADVICE? DIDN'T IT ORDER 200 GRID CAMERAS TO BE SENT TO STRATEGIC POINTS...AIR BASES, A-PLANTS AND OTHER SPOTS...WHERE SAUCERS HAD BEEN SIGHTED?

18

1952 SIGHTINGS

THE SECRETARY KIMBALL CASE

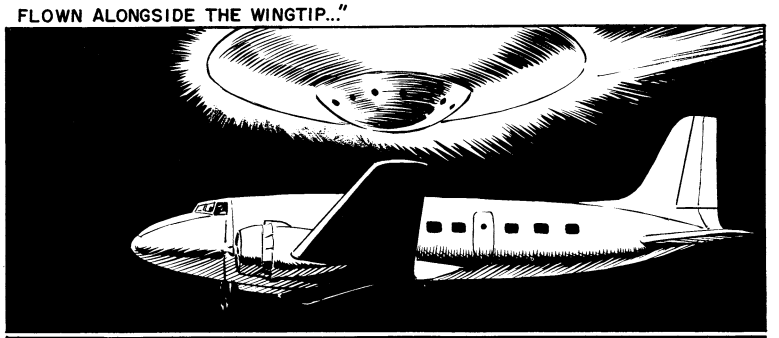
EARLY IN 1952, ACCORDING TO A STORY CARRIED BY THE BOSTON TRAVELER OF MAY 5, 1952, *SECRETARY OF THE NAVY, DAN KIMBALL,* WAS ON A NIGHT FLIGHT FROM PEARL HARBOR TO GUAM. ANOTHER PLANE, WITH ADDITIONAL MEMBERS OF HIS PARTY, WAS TRAILING SEVERAL MILES BEHIND ON THE SAME COURSE. SUDDENLY, A FLYING SAUCER APPEARED OUT OF NOWHERE, BUZZED THE PLANE, AND RACED ABEAM OF IT FOR SOME DISTANCE...



THEN THE SAUCER SHOT OUT OF SIGHT. KIMBALL'S PILOT ASKED HIM...

SHOULD I RADIO A REPORT OF THE INCIDENT TO *PEARL HARBOR,* SIR?
BETTER NOT! THEY *WOULDN'T BELIEVE IT ANYWAY!* SEND A MESSAGE TO THE *OTHER* PLANE, *INSTEAD!* TELL THEM TO KEEP A *SHARP LOOKOUT!*

THE STORY CONTINUED: "IN A MATTER OF MINUTES, THE SECOND PLANE RADIOED EXCITEDLY THAT A FLYING SAUCER HAD JUST COME DOWN AND FLOWN ALONGSIDE THE WINGTIP..."

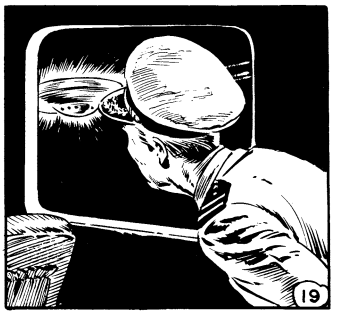


"...THEN HAD SHOT OUT AHEAD AND VANISHED INTO THE SKY..."

KIMBALL, IN TELLING THIS STORY TO A GROUP OF NAVY OFFICERS AT THE NAVAL AIR STATION IN PENSACOLA, STRESSED THE FACT THAT...

I HAVE THE *UTMOST FAITH* IN THE PILOT WHO WAS *WITH ME* THAT NIGHT... A PILOT WHO HAS FLOWN ME *THOUSANDS OF MILES* OVER A PERIOD OF *YEARS...*

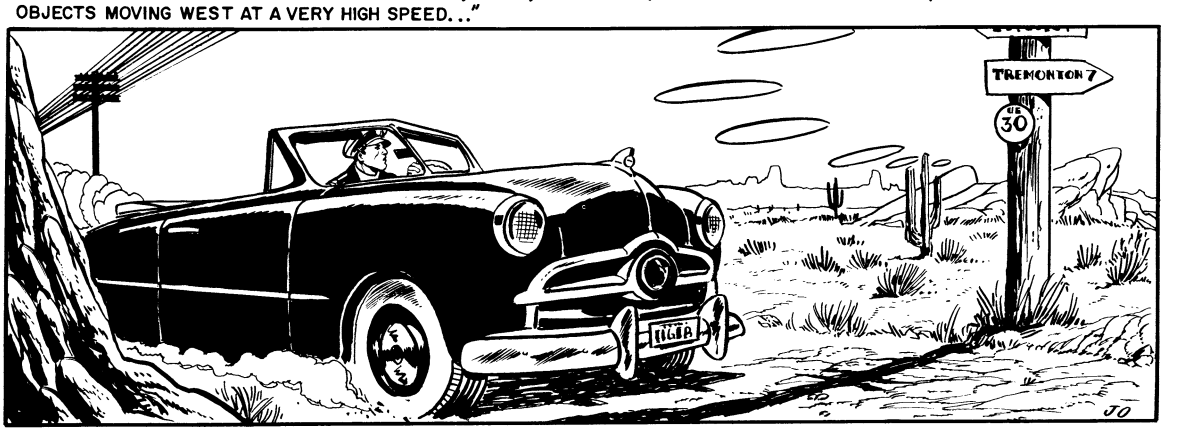
WHAT THE STORY *DID NOT SAY,* AND WHAT *WE* HAVE ON *GOOD AUTHORITY,* IS THAT A *HIGH-RANKING ADMIRAL* WAS IN THAT SECOND PLANE...



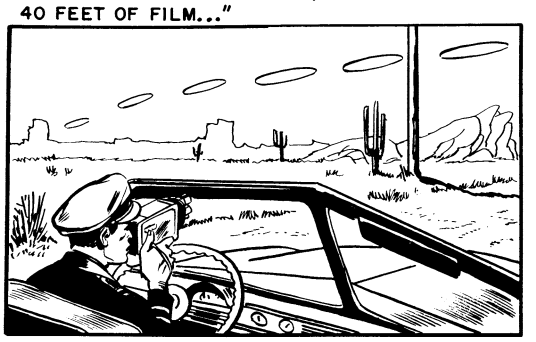
ISN'T IT A FACT THAT SECRETARY KIMBALL, AS A RESULT OF THAT EXPERIENCE, ATTEMPTED TO SET UP HIS OWN "SAUCER INVESTIGATION" BUT DID NOT GET AIR FORCE COOPERATION?

THE UTAH PICTURES

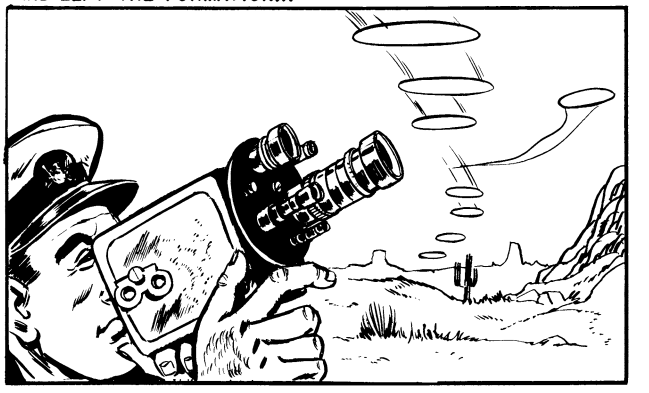
MAJOR DONALD E. KEYHOE, U.S. MARINE CORPS, RET., IN A TELEGRAM SENT TO BRIGADIER GENERAL SORY SMITH AND TO SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE HAROLD E. TALBOTT, TOLD THIS STORY: *ON JULY 2, 1952,* NAVY WARRANT OFFICER *DELBERT C. NEWHOUSE* WAS EN ROUTE TO PORTLAND, OREGON. AT 11:10 A.M., HE WAS AT A POINT ON HIGHWAY 30, SEVEN MILES NORTH OF *TREMONTON, UTAH,* SUDDENLY, HE SAW "A GROUP OF ROUND, EXTREMELY BRIGHT OBJECTS MOVING WEST AT A VERY HIGH SPEED..."



"AS A NAVAL AVIATION PHOTOGRAPHER, NEWHOUSE KNEW THEY WERE NOT AIRCRAFT. USING A BELL AND HOWELL AUTO MASTER MOVIE CAMERA WITH A THREE INCH TELEFOTO LENS, HE SHOT ABOUT 40 FEET OF FILM..."



"NEAR THE END, ONE OF THE OBJECTS REVERSED ITS COURSE AND LEFT THE FORMATION..."



"THE PICTURES WERE STUDIED FOR *MONTHS* BY *THE AIR FORCE PHOTO-RECONNAISSANCE LABORATORY* AT DAYTON, AND LATER BY *THE NAVY PHOTO-INTERPRETATION CENTER* AT WASHINGTON:"

"THE LABORATORIES CAME TO THESE CONCLUSIONS:

1. THE AVERAGE SPEED OF THE UNKNOWN OBJECTS WAS SOMEWHERE BETWEEN 653 AND 980 M.P.H.

2. ALL THE OBJECTS APPEARED ROUND, OF THE SAME SIZE, AND THEY GAVE OFF A BLUEISH-WHITE GLOW OF VERY HIGH INTENSITY.

3. THE OBJECTS SEEMED TO BE MANEUVERING IN A CIRCULAR OR ELLIPTICAL PATTERN WITHIN THE GROUP AT VERY HIGH SPEEDS.

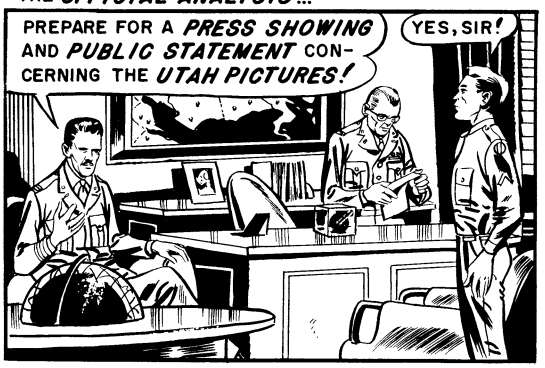
4. BECAUSE OF THESE HIGH SPEEDS, THE OBJECTS OBVIOUSLY COULD NOT BE BALLOONS OR BIRDS.

5. THEY WERE NOT ANY KNOWN TYPE OF AIRCRAFT.

6. THE SIGHTING COULD NOT BE EXPLAINED BY ANY CONVENTIONAL ANSWER..."

20

"THE AIR FORCE HAD...PLANNED TO *SHOW* THIS FILM TO THE *PRESS* AND TO MAKE A *STATEMENT* TO THE *PUBLIC*. THIS STATEMENT WOULD *REVEAL* THE *OFFICIAL ANALYSIS*..."



"WHEN THE COMBINED AIR FORCE AND NAVY ANALYSIS SHOWED THAT THE SAUCERS COULD *NOT* BE ANY *CONVENTIONAL OBJECTS*, AIR FORCE OFFICIALS *DISAGREED* AS TO *WHAT* SHOULD BE *TOLD* THE PUBLIC. THE PLAN FOR A PUBLIC DISCLOSURE WAS *THEN KILLED*..."

MAJOR KEYHOE, WHO HAD BEEN *GIVEN* THE AIR FORCE DATA ON THE UTAH PICTURES *BEFORE* THE OFFICIALS WHO FAVORED A PUBLIC STATEMENT HAD BEEN *OVERRULED*, THEN DECIDED TO *INCLUDE* THIS INFORMATION IN HIS BOOK, *"FLYING SAUCERS FROM OUTER SPACE"*.*

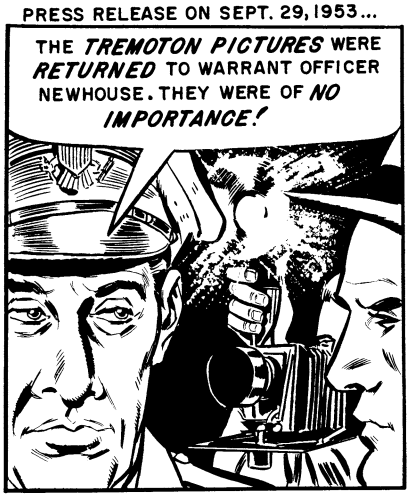
*HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY, N.Y., PUBLISHERS.—EDS.

IN A PRESS RELEASE, DATED SEPT. 28, 1953, 4 P.M., HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY ANNOUNCED...

THE *AIR FORCE HAS SECRET MOTION PICTURES OF FLYING SAUCERS* WHICH *PROVE* THEY ARE *INTERPLANETARY CRAFT*, MAJOR DONALD E. KEYHOE, A RETIRED MARINE CORPS OFFICER...DECLARED TODAY. HIS CLAIM, HE SAID, IS *BACKED* BY *OFFICIAL AIR FORCE DOCUMENTS* CONTAINED IN HIS FORTHCOMING BOOK...*

*ACTUAL QUOTE FROM H.H. & CO. RELEASE.—EDS.

THE CAT WAS OUT OF THE BAG. IN IMMEDIATE RETALIATION, THE OFFICE OF AIR FORCE INFORMATION ISSUED A PRESS RELEASE ON SEPT. 29, 1953...



THIS WAS THE *REASON* FOR MAJOR KEYHOE'S *TELEGRAM*. HE SAID:

ON SEPT. 29, YOUR OFFICE *PUBLICLY IMPLIED* THAT I *MISREPRESENTED* THE AIR FORCE ANALYSIS OF THE *UTAH FLYING SAUCER PICTURES* IN MY BOOK... IF THIS IS *TRUE*, THEN AS A *RETIRED MARINE CORPS OFFICER*, I SHOULD BE *SUBJECTED* TO *DISCIPLINARY ACTION*...IF MY *CLAIMS* ARE *INCORRECT*, THEN I RESPECTFULLY SUGGEST THAT... I BE *COURT-MARTIALED* FOR MAKING *FALSE STATEMENTS* ABOUT THE *AIR FORCE ANALYSIS*.*

*ACTUAL QUOTE—EDS.

THE TELEGRAM WAS DATED OCT. 2, 1953. MAJOR KEYHOE WAS NEVER BROUGHT UP FOR DISCIPLINARY ACTION.

WASN'T THE UTAH FILM RETURNED TO W. O. NEWHOUSE MERELY A POOR COPY?

WEREN'T THERE MANY COPIES MADE AND STUDIED?

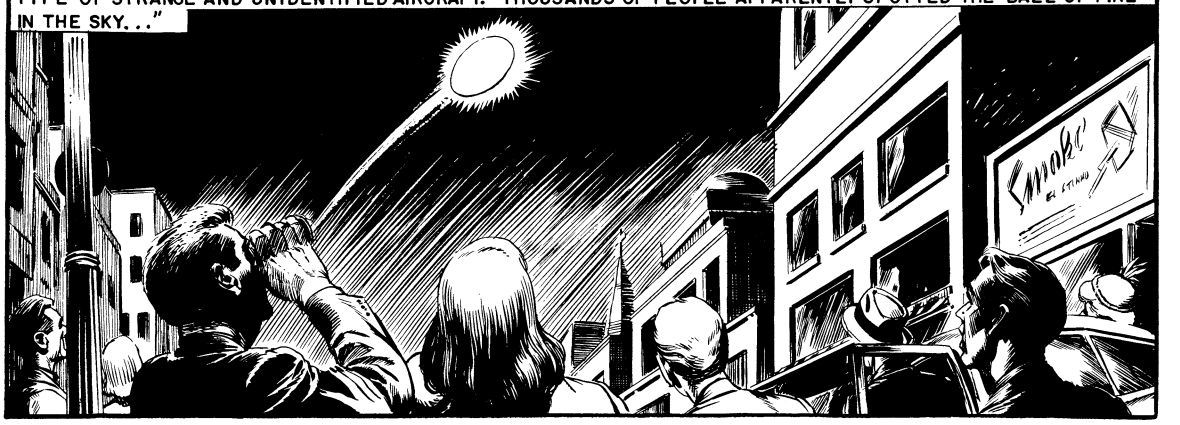
WHERE IS THE ORIGINAL?

WHAT NEWSPAPER CHAIN HAS BEEN DENIED A SHOWING WITH THE CLAIM THAT ALL COPIES WERE BURNED UP FROM OVERUSE?

21

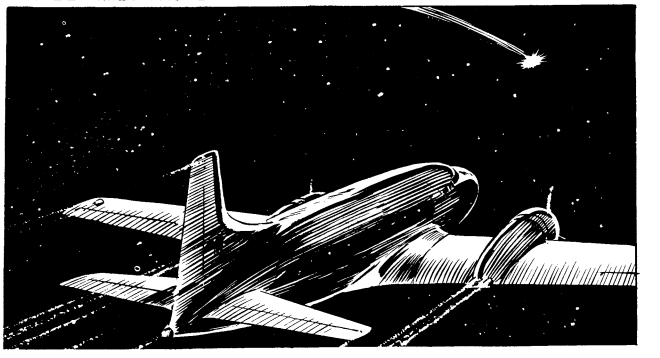
The INDIANAPOLIS CASE

THE INDIANAPOLIS TIMES OF SUNDAY, JULY 13, 1952, CARRIED THIS FIRST PAGE HEADLINE STORY: "*MYSTERY AIRCRAFT BUZZING CITY SEEN BY THOUSANDS.* INDIANAPOLIS WAS BUZZED LAST NIGHT BY A 'FLYING SAUCER' OR OTHER TYPE OF STRANGE AND UNIDENTIFIED AIRCRAFT. THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE APPARENTLY SPOTTED THE 'BALL OF FIRE' IN THE SKY..."

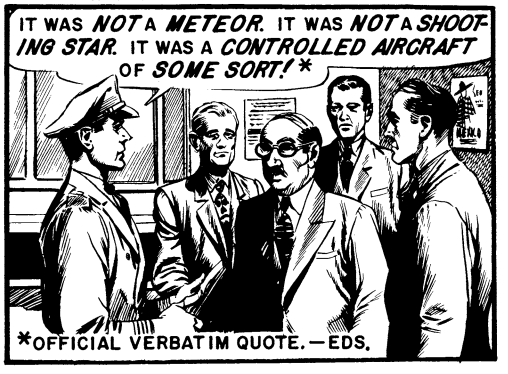


"TELEPHONE SWITCHBOARDS AT THE INDIANAPOLIS TIMES, WEIR COOK AIRPORTS, AND THE STATE POLICE WERE FLOODED WITH CALLS..."

CAPTAIN RICHARD CASE, AMERICAN AIRLINES PILOT, MADE THIS OFFICIAL REPORT: "WE WERE ABOUT 30 MILES SOUTHEAST OF INDIANAPOLIS WHEN THE CO-PILOT, FIRST OFFICER A.E. FISHER, SPOTTED IT. IT WAS THEN AT 15,000 FEET AND GOING ABOUT THREE TIMES FASTER THAN WE WERE..."



THE STORY POINTED OUT: "CAPTAIN CASE WAS FLYING AMERICAN'S CONVAIR FLIGHT 395 AT 300 M.P.H., WHICH WOULD MAKE THE OBJECTS SPEED ABOUT 900 M.P.H." WHEN INTERVIEWED, CAPTAIN CASE STATED:



*OFFICIAL VERBATIM QUOTE.—EDS.

THE STORY ALSO TOLD: "AMONG THE WITNESSES WHO REPORTED THE OBJECT WERE *FIVE PILOTS,* TWO OF THEM PREPARING TO LAND... AT WEIR COOK (AIRPORT), A TOWER OFFICIAL HELD IT IN VIEW WITH FIELD GLASSES..."

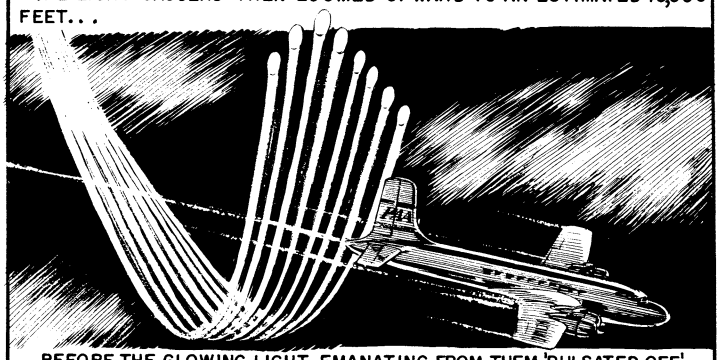
WERE *THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE* NOW HAVING HALLUCINATIONS ? ? ? OR WAS THE *AIR FORCE* HAVING HALLUCINATIONS ABOUT *KEEPING* A SKYWARD-LOOKING, CURIOUS, FACT-DEMANDING PUBLIC *IN THE DARK?*

22

the NASH-FORTENBERRY CASE

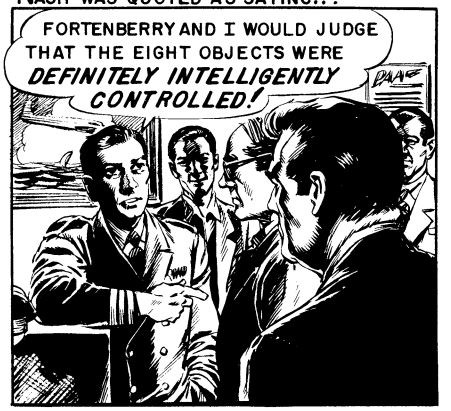
A U.P. DISPATCH, DATELINED MIAMI, FLA., JULY 15, 1952, TELLS OF TWO PAN-AMERICAN AIRWAYS PILOTS, W. B. NASH AND W. H. FORTENBERRY, WHO SAW SIX HUGE FLYING SAUCERS ESTIMATED TO BE 100 FEET IN DIAMETER AND "GLOWING ORANGE-RED LIKE HOT COALS" FLY IN FORMATION SOME 6000 FEET BENEATH THEIR DC-4. THE SIX "THINGS" TURNED WESTWARD SHARPLY WHEN THE P.A.A. PLANE PASSED OVER THEM. SUDDENLY THEY WERE JOINED BY TWO MORE SIMILIAR FLYING DISCS...

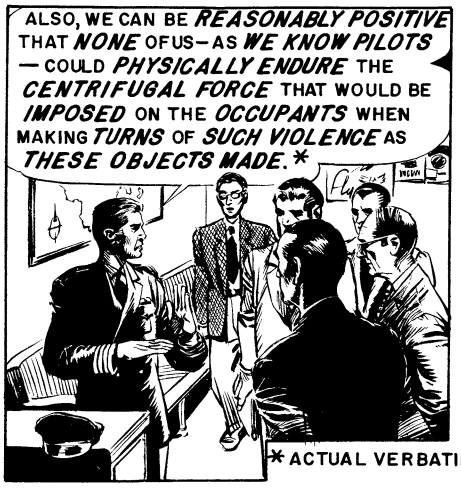
"THE EIGHT 'SAUCERS' THEN ZOOMED UPWARD TO AN ESTIMATED 10,000 FEET...



...BEFORE THE GLOWING LIGHT EMANATING FROM THEM 'PULSATED OFF' AND THEY DISAPPEARED INTO THE NIGHT SKY..."

NASH WAS QUOTED AS SAYING...




ALSO, WE CAN BE *REASONABLY POSITIVE* THAT *NONE* OF US—AS *WE KNOW PILOTS* — COULD *PHYSICALLY ENDURE* THE *CENTRIFUGAL FORCE* THAT WOULD BE *IMPOSED* ON THE *OCCUPANTS* WHEN MAKING *TURNS* OF *SUCH VIOLENCE* AS *THESE OBJECTS MADE.**

WE FEEL, BECAUSE OF THE WAY THE MISSLES *ACTED,* AND BECAUSE OF ALL OF *OTHER* REPORTS THAT HAVE BEEN HEARD, THAT *THEY MUST BE FROM SOME EXTRA-TERRESTRIAL SOURCE!**

TELL US, AIR FORCE... HAVE *ANY* OF THESE PILOTS, ENTRUSTED WITH VALUABLE EQUIPMENT AND THE LIVES OF PASSENGERS, BEEN *GROUNDED* FOR HAVING THESE *HALLUCINATIONS?* WHY *NOT?*

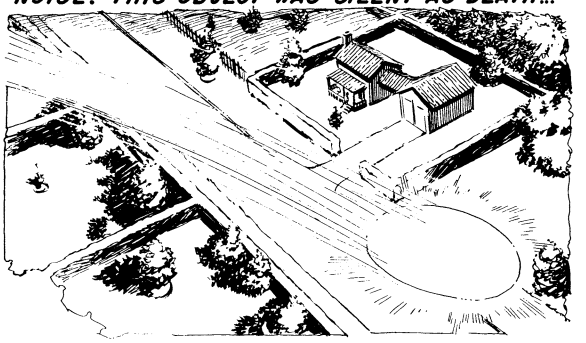
*ACTUAL VERBATIM QUOTES.—EDS.

23

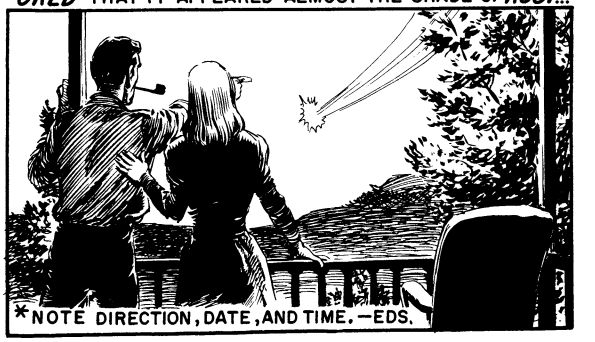
The RIVER EDGE, N.J. CASE

ASSOCIATED PRESS STAFF WRITER, SAUL PETT, IN A DISPATCH DATELINED RIVER EDGE, N.J., JULY 22, 1952, STATES: "I SAW A FLYING SAUCER MYSELF SATURDAY MIDNIGHT... (JULY 19TH). FROM NOW ON, YOU CAN'T CONVINCE ME THERE IS NO SUCH ANIMAL. I WAS SITTING ON MY BACK PORCH ALONE. THE NIGHT WAS CLEAR AND STAR-LIT, UNKISSED BY THE WIND. IDLY, I SAW A TINY ORANGE BALL DRAW INTO VIEW FROM THE NORTHWEST..."

"AT *FIRST*, I THOUGHT IT WAS A *PLANE*. THEN, AS IT DREW *CLOSER*... I HAD *TWO THOUGHTS* THAT HIT ME WITH *QUITE AN IMPACT*. *PLANES* HAVE *TWO* (OR MORE) *LIGHTS* THAT FLICK *ON* AND *OFF*. *THIS* OBJECT HAD ONLY *ONE CONSTANT LIGHT*. *PLANES* MAKE *NOISE*. *THIS OBJECT WAS SILENT AS DEATH*..."



"THE OBJECT FLEW TO THE *SOUTHEAST*.* I SAW IT FOR ABOUT A *MINUTE* TO A *MINUTE AND A HALF*. I CALLED MY *WIFE*. SHE WATCHED IT AND THOUGHT IT LOOKED LIKE A *JAPANESE LANTERN*. TO *ME* IT LOOKED LIKE A *SPHERE*, SO *DEEPLY ORANGE COLORED* THAT IT APPEARED ALMOST THE SHADE OF *RUST*."

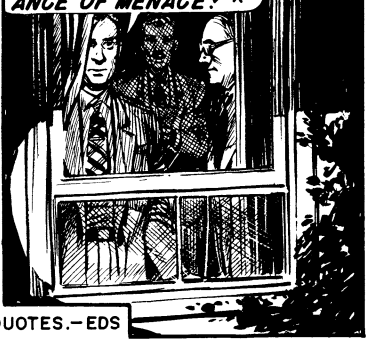


*NOTE DIRECTION, DATE, AND TIME. —EDS.

COULD IT HAVE BEEN A *SHOOTING STAR* OR A *METEOR*? WELL, *THEY* SORT OF *SHOOT DOWN* AND *FADE AWAY*. BUT NOT *THIS* THING—*ITS INTENSE GLOW STAYED CONSTANT*. IT *DIDN'T* GET *LOST*. COULD IT HAVE BEEN THE *REFLECTION* OF A *SEARCHLIGHT* ON A *CLOUD*? *THE SKY WAS CLOUDLESS!**

*ACTUAL QUOTES.—EDS

...AND IT WAS MOVING *TOO FAST* AND *TOO EVENLY* TO BE A *BALLOON*. I WASN'T FRIGHTENED AT ALL, BECAUSE THE THING LOOKED SO *PEACEFUL* AND SO *SERENE*. *THERE WASN'T ANY APPEARANCE OF MENACE!**



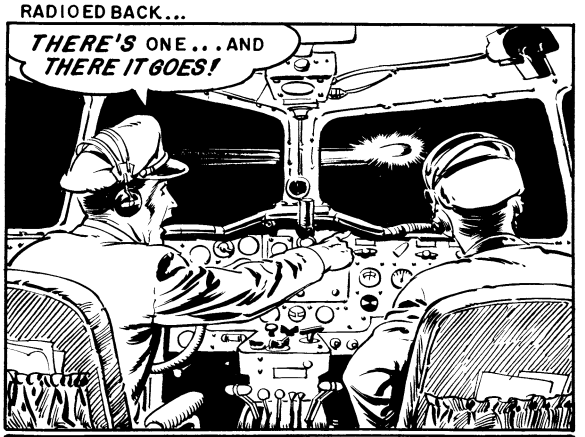
IS *THAT* WHAT IT IS, AIR FORCE? ARE YOU AFRAID THE SAUCERS ARE A *MENACE*? DO YOU HAVE ANY *PROOF* OTHER THAN MANTELL'S DEATH (WHICH *YOU* SAID WAS CAUSED BY *BLACK-OUT* DUE TO *LACK OF OXYGEN AT 20,000 FEET*)?

WELL, *HOLD TIGHT*, AIR FORCE. PETT'S SAUCER WAS FLYING *SOUTH-EAST* FROM RIVER EDGE, N.J. IT WAS HEADED FOR THE *MOST HUMILIATING SIGHTINGS OF ALL!* 24

SAUCERS OVER WASHINGTON, D.C.

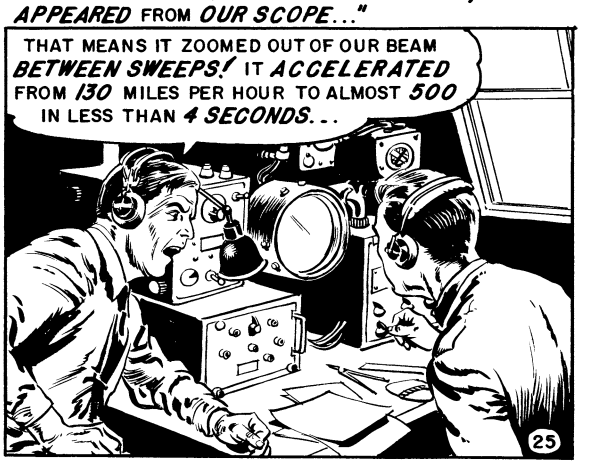
HARRY G. BARNES, SENIOR AIR ROUTE TRAFFIC CONTROLLER FOR THE CIVIL AERONAUTICS ADMINISTRATION, WAS IN CHARGE OF THE NATIONAL AIRPORT, WASHINGTON, D.C., A.R.T. CONTROL CENTER ON THE NIGHT OF JULY 19, 1952. "BRIEFLY," HE STATES IN A NEWSPAPER ARTICLE, "...OUR JOB IS TO CONSTANTLY MONITOR THE SKIES AROUND THE NATION'S CAPITOL WITH THE ELECTRONIC EYE OF RADAR..." SHORTLY AFTER MIDNIGHT ON THAT DATE, SEVEN PIPS APPEARED SUDDENLY ON THE CONTROL CENTER'S SCOPE. ED NUGENT, JIM COPELAND, AND JIM RITCHEY, ALL EXPERIENCED RADAR CONTROLLERS, CHECKED THE OBSERVATIONS. THE AIRPORT CONTROL TOWER RADAR OPERATOR VERIFIED THE SAME SIGHTING. *THEY WERE OVER "THE RESTRICTED AREAS OF WASHINGTON,* INCLUDING THE *WHITE HOUSE* AND THE *CAPITOL..."*

CAPTAIN C.S. PIERMAN, A CAPITOL AIRLINES PILOT OF 17 YEARS' FLYING EXPERIENCE, SHORTLY AFTER TAKING OFF, WAS ASKED TO CHECK THESE MYSTERIOUS OBJECTS. HE RADIOED BACK...



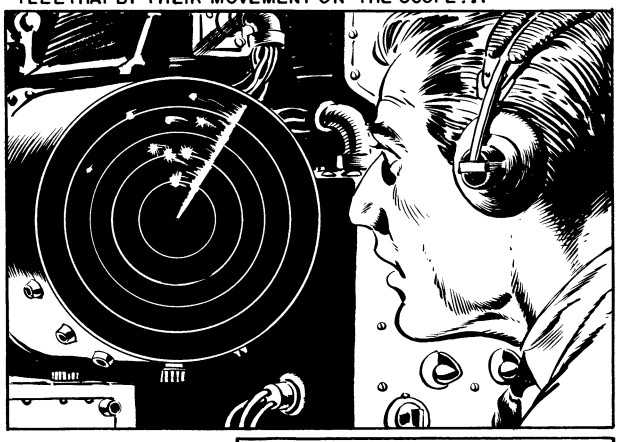
PIERMAN DESCRIBED IT AS A BRIGHT LIGHT MOVING FASTER, AT TIMES, THAN A SHOOTING STAR...

BARNES STATES: "DURING THE NEXT 14 MINUTES, HE (PIERMAN) REPORTED THAT HE SAW SIX SUCH LIGHTS... *EACH SIGHTING COINCIDED WITH A PIP WE COULD SEE NEAR HIS PLANE.* WHEN *HE* REPORTED THAT THE LIGHT *STREAKED OFF AT HIGH SPEED,* IT *DISAPPEARED* FROM *OUR SCOPE..."*

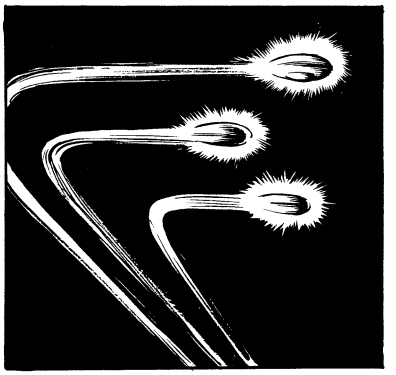

THAT MEANS IT ZOOMED OUT OF OUR BEAM *BETWEEN SWEEPS!* IT *ACCELERATED* FROM *130* MILES PER HOUR TO ALMOST *500* IN LESS THAN *4 SECONDS...*
25

BARNES THEN STATES: "BEFORE NOTIFYING THE AIR FORCE... OUR TECHNICIANS HAD CAREFULLY CHECKED THE EQUIPMENT TO MAKE CERTAIN THAT IT WAS OPERATING PERFECTLY..."

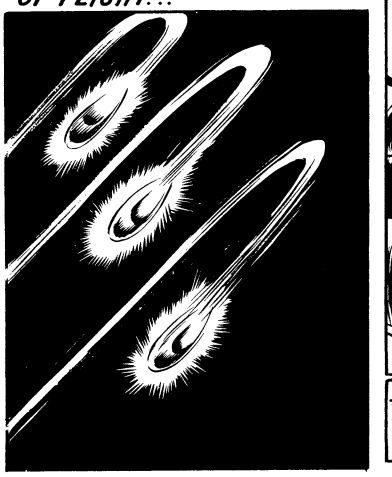
"THERE IS NO OTHER CONCLUSION I CAN REACH BUT THAT FOR SIX HOURS ON THE MORNING OF THE 20TH OF JULY THERE WERE AT LEAST 10 UNIDENTIFIABLE OBJECTS MOVING OVER WASHINGTON. THEY WERE NOT ORDINARY AIRCRAFT. I COULD TELL THAT BY THEIR MOVEMENT ON THE SCOPE..."



"I CAN *SAFELY DEDUCE* THAT THEY PERFORMED GYRATIONS WHICH *NO KNOWN AIRCRAFT COULD PERFORM.* BY THIS I MEAN THAT OUR SCOPE SHOWED THAT THEY COULD MAKE *RIGHT ANGLE TURNS!*"



"...AND *COMPLETE REVERSALS OF FLIGHT...*"



"*NOR* IN MY OPINION COULD *ANY NATURAL PHENOMENA* SUCH AS *SHOOTING STARS, ELECTRICAL DISTURBANCES,* OR *CLOUDS* ACCOUNT FOR THESE SPOTS ON OUR RADAR."*

*NOT TO MENTION PIERMAN'S ACTUAL VISIBLE SIGHTINGS OF THE OBJECTS.—EDS.

THE AIR FORCE DUG DEEP IN AN EFFORT TO SQUIRM OUT OF THIS SIGHTING. AT 4 O'CLOCK ON JULY 29, 1952, A PRESS CONFERENCE WAS HELD...

GENTLEMEN! THE RADAR SIGHTINGS OVER WASHINGTON WERE CAUSED BY *TEMPERATURE INVERSION.* THE OBJECTS WERE *REFLECTIONS* OF *GROUND* OBJECTS... *CARS... TRAINS...* ETC...

THIS WAS THE AIR FORCE'S *GLIB ANSWER.* THEY DREW UPON *DR. DONALD H. MENZEL'S TEMPERATURE-INVERSION THEORY:* WHEN A LAYER OF *COOL* AIR LIES *BENEATH* A LAYER OF *WARM* AIR, LIGHT RAYS ARE *REFRACTED* AS THEY *PASS THROUGH.* IF A TEMPERATURE-INVERSION IS *STRONG ENOUGH... 10 TO 18 DEGREES DIFFERENCE...* LIGHT RAYS MAY EVEN BE *REFLECTED.* THIS IS WHAT CAUSES *MIRAGES* ON DESERTS OR HEATED ROADS. *LIKE* LIGHT, *RADAR WAVES* ARE *ALSO* REFRACTED OR REFLECTED. *"TEMPERATURE-INVERSION,"* THE AIR FORCE SAID, *"WAS THE ANSWER."*

JUST TWO POINTS, BOYS:

(1) THE ACTUAL TEMPERATURE INVERSION OVER WASHINGTON ON THE NIGHT OF JULY 19, '52, WAS JUST ONE DEGREE FAHRENHEIT! AND (2) YOU FORGOT THE VISUAL SIGHTINGS! [26]

The 1952 HAMILTON A.F.B. CASE

THE SAN FRANCISO CHRONICLE OF AUG. 4, 1952 CARRIED THIS STORY OF ANOTHER SIMULTANEOUS SIGHTING (I.E. BOTH VISUAL AND RADAR). LT. DUANE SWIMLEY, A JET PILOT ASSIGNED TO THE 83RD FIGHTER SQUADRON, WAS OFF DUTY ON SUNDAY AFTERNOON AND IN HIS BACK YARD AT MEADOW PARK, A HOUSING TRACT AT HAMILTON AIR FORCE BASE, WHEN HE NOTICED EIGHT GLEAMING OBJECTS MANEUVERING IN THE SKIES OVER THE FARALLONES...

IN LT. SWIMLEY'S OWN WORDS: "WE WATCHED FOR FIFTEEN MINUTES, (HE AND A NEIGHBOR)... AND WERE JOINED BY SIX OTHER OFFICERS, SOME OF THEM PILOTS LIKE MYSELF. *THESE OBJECTS WERE NO REFLECTIONS!"*

"THESE OBJECTS WENT THROUGH DIFFERENT MANEUVERS AND THEN BROKE OFF INTO A TRAILING FORMATION... ONCE, ONE DIVED, AND ITS SIZE ENLARGED AS IT DESCENDED..."

THE ARTICLE THEN STATED: "THE 28TH AIR DIVISION (DEFENSE), WHICH IS HEADQUARTERS FOR THE RADAR NET ALONG THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA COAST, REPORTED PICKING UP 'PIPS' OF UNIDENTIFIED OBJECTS ON THEIR RADAR SCOPES OVER THE FARALLONES..."

WHAT WAS THE TEMPERATURE-INVERSION OVER THE FARALLONES AND HAMILTON AIR BASE ON THAT DAY?

DOESN'T SIMULTANEOUS SIGHTINGS, BOTH VISUAL AND RADAR, TEAR THE TEMPERATURE-INVERSION THEORY TO SHREDS?

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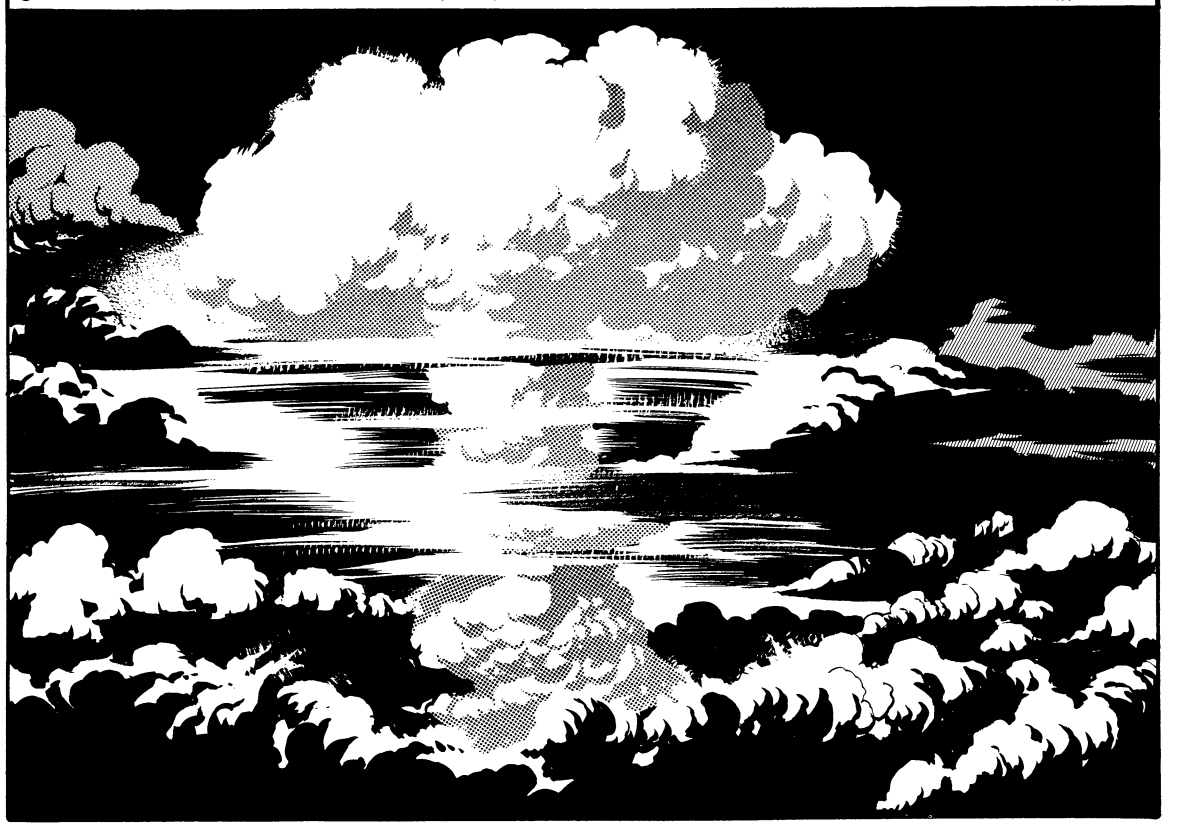
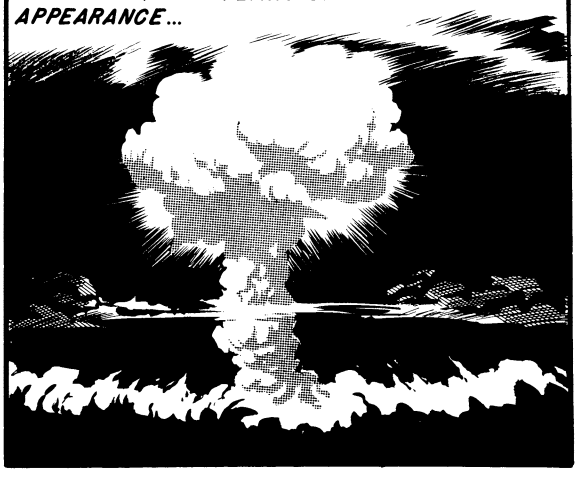
RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

THERE WERE HUNDREDS UPON HUNDREDS OF MORE SIGHTINGS DURING THE REST OF 1952 AND 1953. PERHAPS, IN A *FUTURE* REPORT, WE WILL *COVER* THESE. BUT LET'S CLOSE UP OUR CASE FILES. LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT NOW... AT *1954*...

ON MARCH 1ST AND AGAIN ON MARCH 26TH, 1954, THE UNITED STATES EXPLODED TWO COLOSSAL H-BOMBS...



IT WAS *AFTER* THE *1947 ATOMIC BOMB TESTS* AT ALAMAGORDO, THAT *"FLYING SAUCERS"* MADE THEIR *APPEARANCE*...



WHAT WILL THE *H-BOMB TESTS* BRING? *MORE SAUCERS? MORE SIGHTINGS? PERHAPS LANDINGS? ACTUAL CONTACTS?...*

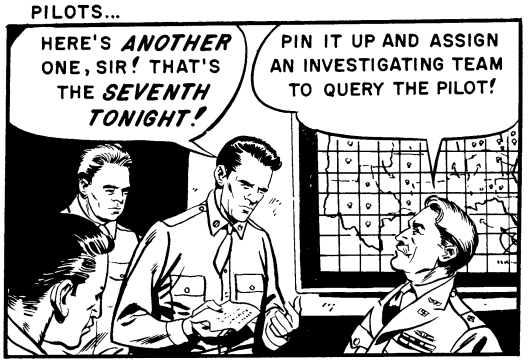
ONE THING IS CERTAIN. IF THERE IS ANY POSSIBILITY OF THIS, THE AIR FORCE SHOULD BE PREPARING US INSTEAD OF WHITEWASHING THE FACTS!

28

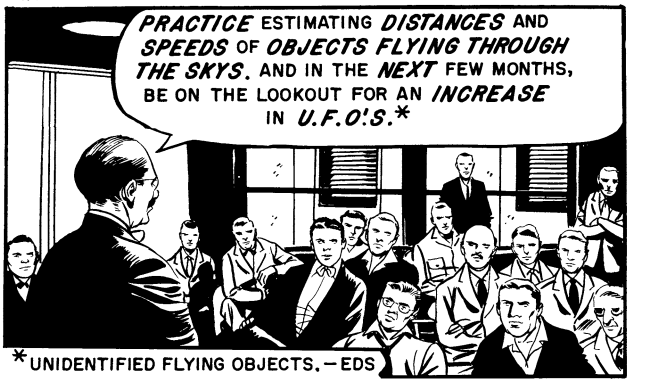
IF THERE IS *NOTHING TO THE "FLYING SAUCERS"*, WHY WAS A *MEETING* HELD ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 1954 IN LOS ANGELES BETWEEN *REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NATION'S AIRLINES* AND *MILITARY AIR TRANSPORT SERVICE (MATS)* TO DISCUSS IMPLEMENTATION OF *"THE CIRVUS PLAN"?...*

HERETOFORE, COMMERCIAL PILOTS HAVE *LANDED* AND *THEN* REPORTED FLYING SAUCER REPORTS TO MATS. BY *THAT* TIME, THE *TRAIL* IS USUALLY *COLD*. UNDER THE *CIRVUS PLAN*, PILOTS WILL *FLASH* REPORTS *DIRECT TO MATS* AT THE *NEAREST AIR FORCE BASE IMMEDIATELY UPON SIGHTING A SAUCER!* IN *THAT* WAY, THE *AIR FORCE* CAN SEND *FAST JET FIGHTERS* TO *INVESTIGATE PROMPTLY...*

THE *SOURCE* FOR THE ABOVE INFORMATION ALSO TOLD THAT BETWEEN *FIVE* AND *TEN* FLYING SAUCER SIGHTINGS ARE BEING MADE *EVERY NIGHT* BY COMMERCIAL AIRLINE PILOTS...

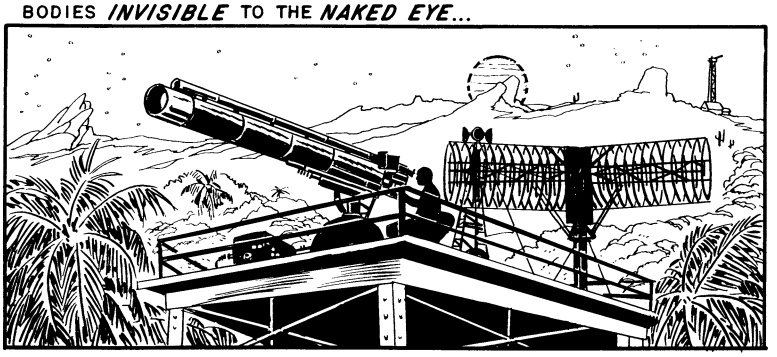


IF THERE IS *NOTHING TO THE "FLYING SAUCERS"*, WHY DID *DR. CLYDE TOMBAUGH INSTRUCT HIS STAFF* AT WHITE SANDS RECENTLY...?


PRACTICE ESTIMATING *DISTANCES* AND *SPEEDS* OF *OBJECTS FLYING THROUGH THE SKYS*. AND IN THE *NEXT* FEW MONTHS, BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR AN *INCREASE* IN *U.F.O!S.**

*UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECTS.—EDS

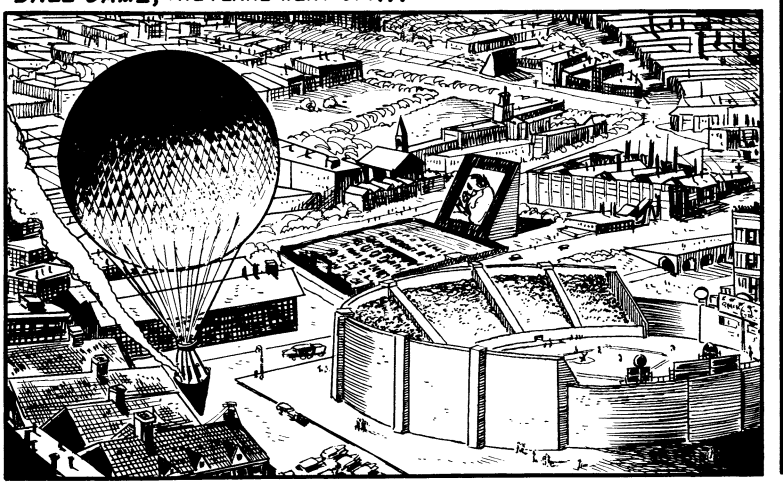
THIS *SAME DR. CLYDE TOMBAUGH*, THE MAN WHO DISCOVERED THE PLANET *PLUTO*, AND *DR. LINCOLN LA PAZ*, DIRECTOR OF THE INSTITUTE OF METEORICS, ARE *PRESENTLY* ENGAGED IN A *SECRET GOVERNMENT SEARCH FOR TINY SATELLITES* THAT ARE *KNOWN* TO BE *CIRCLING THE EARTH*. THEY ARE EMPLOYING *SPECIAL TELESCOPE-CAMERAS* THAT *SWEEP THE SKY* AND ARE ABLE TO PHOTOGRAPH HIGH-SPEED BODIES *INVISIBLE* TO THE *NAKED EYE*...



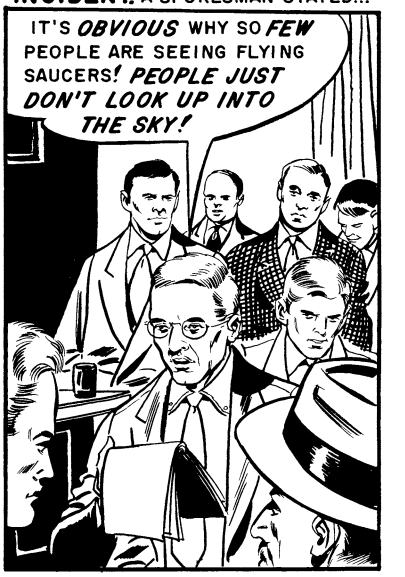
ARE THESE TINY SATELLITES THE LAUNCHING PLATFORMS...THE REFUELING BASES... FOR THE FLYING SAUCERS THAT HAVE BEEN OBSERVING EARTH CLOSELY FOR THE PAST SEVEN YEARS?

29

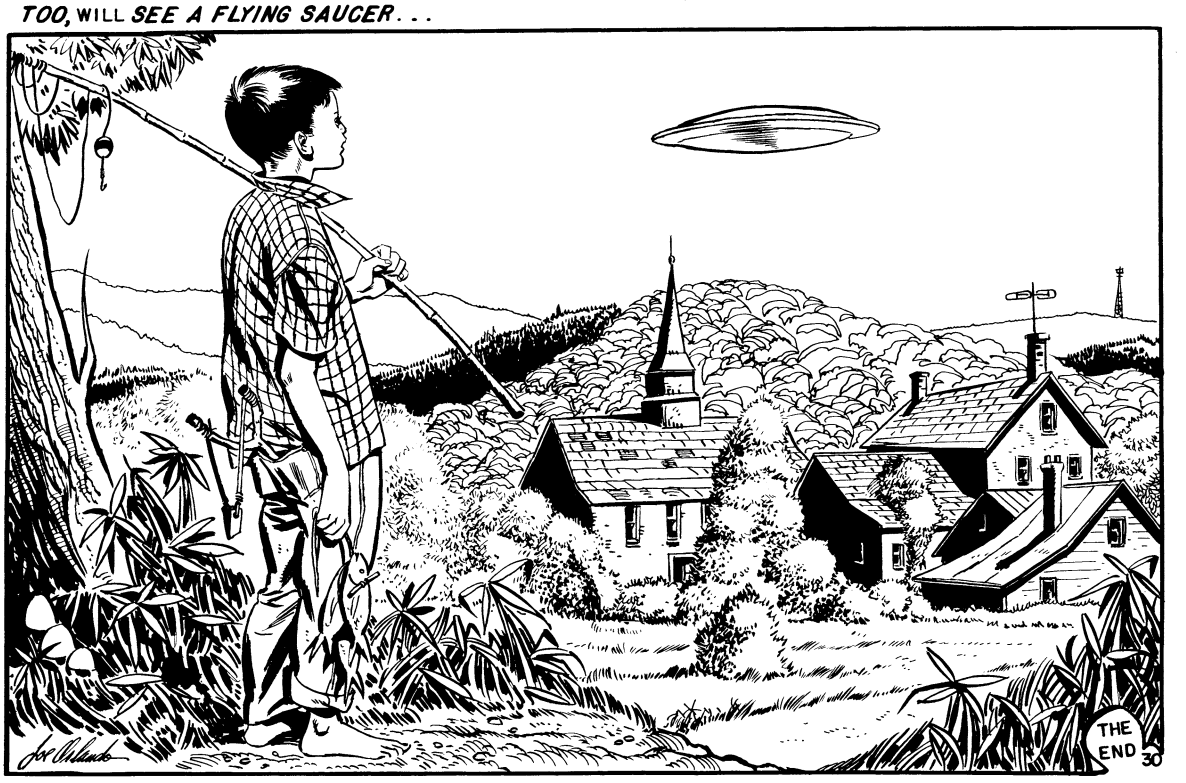
IN *OTTAWA, CANADA,* PROJECT "MAGNET," THE FLYING SAUCER INVESTIGATING AGENCY FOR THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT, TRIED AN *EXPERIMENT.* THEY *FASTENED A 500,000 CANDLE-POWER AIRCRAFT FLARE INSIDE AN ALUMINUM CONE AND SUSPENDED THE CONE UNDER A LARGE WEATHER BALLOON* SO THAT THE FLARE, WHEN SET OFF, WOULD ILLUMINATE THE *UNDERSIDE* OF THE *BALLOON.* AT *5000 FEET,* WHEN THE BALLOON WAS OVER AN AREA OF THE CITY WHERE THERE WERE *TWO DRIVE-IN THEATERS AND A STADIUM JAMMED WITH PEOPLE WATCHING A NIGHT BASEBALL GAME,* THE FLARE WENT OFF...



THE *EFFECT* WAS AS IF A *LIGHTED DISC* HAD *SUDDENLY APPEARED* IN THE SKY. **NOT ONE CALL CAME IN REPORTING THE INCIDENT.** A SPOKESMAN STATED...



SO *LIFT YOUR HEAD UP... ABOVE* THE SMOKE SCREEN OF *CONTRIVED EXPLANATIONS* AND *HALF-TRUTHS. LOOK TO THE SKYS, AMERICA!* PERHAPS ONE NIGHT *YOU'LL* JOIN THE HUNDREDS UPON HUNDREDS OF *COMPETENT CIVILIAN AND ARMY PILOTS, SCIENTISTS, AND AERONAUTICAL EXPERTS* WHO HAVE BEEN TERMED BY THE AIR FORCE AS "*MISINTERPRETORS, HYSTERICS,* AND *PUBLICITY SEEKERS!*" PERHAPS *YOU, TOO,* WILL *SEE A FLYING SAUCER...*



TO SUMMARIZE THIS REPORT, E.C. ASKS THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS OF THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE:

If there is nothing to the "Flying Saucers"...

1. Why have Canada, Great Britain, France, Sweden, Norway, and Denmark all instituted "flying saucer" investigations for the purpose of analyzing sightings over their various countries?

2. Why has the "Mars Committee," suddenly formed at the end of 1953 by prominent American astronomers, invited scientists from all over the world to join in a detailed study of Mars during the spring and summer of 1954?

3. Why hasn't one civilian or army pilot who has reported seeing a "saucer" been grounded for fatigue, hallucinations, or incompetence?

4. Why was the "Cirvus Plan" put into operation, and why were commercial pilots requested to keep their sightings confidential?

5. Why has the Air Force continually ridiculed its best-trained observers who reported sightings, and why weren't these observers consequently fired?

6. Why are some of America's highest skilled and most respected scientists now under secret contract to evaluate all "flying saucer" reports?

7. Why was "Project Saucer," the press name for "Project Sign," kept a top-secret investigating agency between Jan. 1948 (Mantell's death) and April, 1949, (its first released report)?

8. Why did "Project Saucer's" Final Report, at the end of 1949, completely reverse its stand from the earlier April report?

9. Why are all "Project Saucer" sighting-cases and their evaluations, once released to the press, now unavailable? Have they been re-classified as "Top-Secret?"

10. If Maj. Donald E. Keyhoe's statement (that the Air Force has analyzed the "Utah Pictures" and found them to be genuine and that the objects photographed [16mm-color] could not be explained as any known aircraft or other conventional objects) is untrue, why hasn't his request that he be court-martialed been granted?

11. Why, when you claimed that "Project Saucer" was terminated, did you not announce that "Project Grudge" had taken its place?

12. Why were 200 Grid Cameras ordered and sent to various strategic locations?

13. Why did "Project Bluebook" replace "Project Grudge" at almost the same time as the Grid Cameras were being located.

14. Where is the original of W/O Newhouse's Utah Pictures?

15. Why has a prominent newspaper chain, interested in re-examining the "Flying Saucer" story, been denied a copy of the Utah Pictures? Is it this powerful newspaper chain's interest that has caused the once-released sighting-cases to become suddenly unavailable?

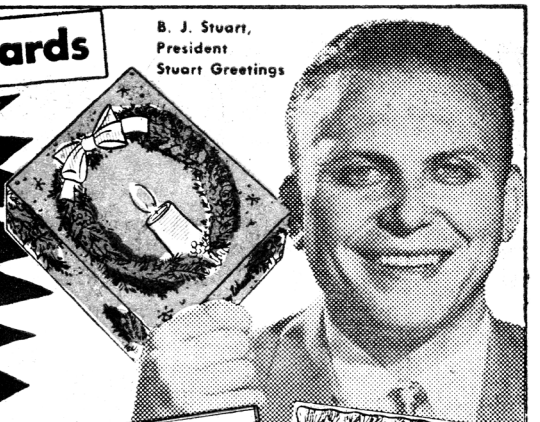
16. Why was the "Project Twinkle" report never made? ("Project Twinkle" was the name given the special AMC investigation of the Green Fireballs that have been consistently seen over New Mexico since the Atomic Bomb tests.)

17. Why are Drs. Clyde Tombaugh and Lincoln La Paz busily photographing the skies above White Sands these nights, searching for high-speed satellites known to be circling the Earth?

WHEN ARE YOU GOING TO TELL US THE **TRUTH** ABOUT THE FLYING SAUCERS?

$1 Box of 21 New Christmas Cards

Yours FREE!



B. J. Stuart,
President
Stuart Greetings

I'll Give You This Feature Assortment of 21 New, Lovely Christmas Cards Free To Prove How Easily You Can Earn **$75.00 OR MORE** Showing These Cards In Your Spare Time!

Amazing Get-Acquainted Offer For
MEN! WOMEN! BOYS! GIRLS!

Imagine! This big box of 21 beautiful new Christmas Cards is yours without one penny's cost to you. You won't be asked to return the cards or pay for them, now or ever. We're making this amazing offer to show you how easily you can make as much as $75.00 and more with our exciting new Christmas Cards!

ANYONE CAN MAKE MONEY THIS EASY WAY!

Whether you're 8 or 80 . . . a student, housewife or have a full-time job . . . you can make big money in your spare time! You don't need any experience. We'll supply you with a big outfit of actual samples ON APPROVAL. Just show these samples to people you know. Our big values sell on sight—and you keep up to half of each dollar as your big cash profit. You can quickly make $75.00 selling only 150 boxes. With our big line of Christmas and All-Occasion Assortments, Name-Imprinted Christmas Cards, Stationery and other fast-sellers, you make still more money!

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Send no money. Just mail coupon for sample outfit ON APPROVAL and Feature Assortment FREE. You must be satisfied that you can make money this easy way, or you may return the samples only. THE $1.00 FEATURE ASSORTMENT IS YOURS TO KEEP, FREE, WHETHER YOU RETURN THE SAMPLE OUTFIT OR NOT! This offer is limited, one to a family, and may never be repeated.

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I am interested in making money with your outfit of sample assortments. Rush it ON APPROVAL. Include $1 Feature Christmas Assortment FREE, per your offer.

Name_____

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If for fund-raising, give organization's name below

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FREE BOX COUPON
Mail coupon for money-making sample outfit ON APPROVAL. Get Feature Assortment as a FREE GIFT for trying our plan.
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"I make $30 to $40 a week, in my spare time. It's easy. Your cards sell themselves!"
R.B.T., New Mexico

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Complete Starting Outfit Sent FREE!
De Luxe Sample Kit
Worth $35
Loaned Without Cost to Qualified Men Everywhere
Just 2 Sales a Day Brings You up to $217 EXTRA a Month!

We Show You How To Do It!

Now, without spending one cent, you can start a spare-time Shoe Business that brings in exciting cash profits every month! My powerful Selling Outfit makes it **easy.** Just take 2 orders a day for our fine, Nationally-Advertised shoes and you earn up to **$217.50 *extra*** a month! You also get chances to win valuable free prizes.

EVERYBODY Wears Shoes!

Here's the perfect business, because EVERYONE you know can be a customer! Just show friends, relatives, neighbors, people where you work, how Mason Velvet-eez Air Cushion shoes let them "Walk on Air". That's REAL comfort!

As the Mason Shoe Counselor you give people the EXACT style, size and width they order because you draw on our giant stock of 200,000 pairs in sizes 2½ to 15, widths AAAA to EEEE. Customers choose from over 160 different styles—dress, sport and work styles for men and women, including air-cooled Nylon Mesh shoes, also work shoes with special built-in comfort and safety features. You'll be EXCITED the way people stuff steady cash profits in your pocket for extra-comfortable Mason shoes!

MASON SHOE MFG. CO.
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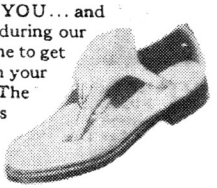

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JOE ORLANDO

"I always picked up more work than we could handle. Woody was so mad at me!"

— Joe Orlando, "DC Profiles Number 63," *The Unexpected* #201, August 1980

Shortly after Joe Orlando started in comics, he began collaborating with Wallace Wood. For several years, before he finally established his own style, his art bore the stamp of Wood's influence. But although they launched their careers together, the two men's lives could not have been more different. Wood's success faded, and his life ended in bitterness, poverty, illness, and tragedy, while Orlando had a highly successful artistic and editorial career and rose to become a vice president at DC Comics.

Orlando was born April 4, 1927, in Bari, Italy. His family immigrated to the U.S. in 1929, when he was 2. Early on, Orlando was attracted to art and took his first art classes at a boys' club in his neighborhood in New York City at the age of 7. He continued them until he was 14, winning prizes each year in the club's annual competitions, including a bronze medal in the prestigious John Wanamaker competition.

At 14, Orlando began taking classes at what was then called the School of Industrial Art (later renamed the High School of Art and Design). A great many comics artists came out of that school, including Alex Toth, Frank Giacoia, and future DC Comics publisher Carmine Infantino (who would later become a good friend of Orlando's). Orlando made his first professional sale — illustrations for *The Prince and the Pauper* for a high school English textbook — while still in school himself.

Since he came of age during World War II, it was only natural for Orlando to join the Army after high school graduation. He was assigned as an M.P. to guard the post stockade. He transferred to Europe, where he served in the military police at Le Havre, France and Antwerp, Belgium, before being sent to occupied Germany. The military did not see fit to utilize his artistic skills, as it did with his future EC colleagues Harvey Kurtzman and Jack Davis. The closest Orlando got to making art was painting stencils on some boxcars while in Germany.

He was discharged from the Army in 1947 and used the G.I. Bill to take classes at the Art Students League. His first work in comics came in 1949 when he went to work for Lloyd Jacquet's comics shop, drawing "Chuck White" for the Catholic Church's *Treasure Chest* comic, for a meager $9.00 a page. While working for Jacquet, Orlando met Tex Blaisdell, with whom he would collaborate frequently in the coming decades.

Orlando soon hooked up with Wallace Wood, who had started working for EC in 1949. Wood was already producing artwork with Harry Harrison (the future science fiction author) for EC, so the first work that Orlando did with Wood was for other accounts. One of those accounts was Avon Comics, where the team produced the classic standouts *An Earth Man on Venus* and *The Mask of Dr. Fu Manchu* as well as individual stories for titles like *Strange Worlds*, *Witchcraft*, and *With the U.S. Paratroops Behind Enemy Lines*.

OPPOSITE: Marie Severin drew Joe Orlando in this detail from EC's 1954 "Thank You for Your Note" flyer. These flyers were sent in response to readers' letters to EC. (See the whole flyer, with Marie's caricatures of all the EC artists, in *Code Of Honor And Other Stories*, Volume 32.)

They also produced comics work for publishers Victor Fox and Youthful Magazines.

Even though their rates for Fox were low, when Fox went out of business, Orlando and Wood were owed $6,000. Orlando became so discouraged by that substantial loss of income that he quit comics and took a job in the stockroom of a handbag factory. Orlando was miserable there but, at least, he reasoned, he had a steady paycheck, unlike a freelance comics artist who had to depend on unethical and unreliable publishers like Fox.

Orlando stayed away from the comics business for nine months, ignoring the initial blandishments of his friend Wood to return. Finally, Wood wore him down, and Orlando began helping Wood a few hours a week, earning more than his paltry salary at the handbag factory. With Wood's encouragement, Orlando finally showed samples to EC editor Al Feldstein, who hired him on the spot, proclaiming, "Terrific, we have another Wally Wood!"

THIS SECOND "E.C. QUICKIE" STARTS IN THE SAME PLACE... OUR OFFICES! WEIRD SPACE-OPERAS NUMBER 69 IS FINALLY FINISHED...
WELL, BILL! THAT'S THAT! WHEW! THIS ONE WAS REALLY TOUGH!
YOU CAN SAY THAT AGAIN!

Because he partnered with Wood for several years, Orlando's early work is reminiscent of Wood's, but he ultimately established his own style. He produced many classic tales for EC's science fiction titles, such as "Chewed Out!" (p. 48); the hilarious "EC Quickies," "The Expert!"/"The Ad!" (p. 89); "Bum Steer" (p. 102); and more, including "The Fossil," and four stories adapted by Al Feldstein from "Eando" (Otto) Binder: "The Teacher From Mars," and three of Binder's famous "Adam Link" robot stories (all in *Judgment Day And Other Stories*, Volume 9 in this series). (Orlando would revisit Adam Link in the 1960s for Warren's *Creepy*, doing those stories in evocative gray washes.)

Orlando also did fine work for EC's horror and shock titles, especially "The Monkey," a harrowing anti-drug polemic; "Midnight Mess" (adapted as part of the 1971 *Tales From the Crypt* film); and "The Craving Grave" a grisly tearjerker (all in *The Thing From The Grave And Other Stories*, Volume 19 in this series). In all, he produced 94 stories and four covers during his time working for EC Comics.

Ironically, Orlando's last appearance in an EC color comic was also the last story in the last comic book EC put out. "Judgment Day" (*Judgment Day And Other Stories*) had been published earlier, but when the new Comics Code Authority declared Angelo Torres's "An Eye For An Eye," (*50 Girls 50 And Other Stories*, Volume 3) unsuitable for *Incredible Science Fiction* #33 (January-February 1956), publisher Bill Gaines and editor Al Feldstein decided to reprint the classic Orlando-drawn parable about racism in place of the rejected story.

But the substitution turned out to be not so simple. Gaines had already decided he would publish no more color comic books, but when he submitted "Judgment Day," the Code objected to Orlando's depiction of sweat on the Black astronaut's face in the final panel. Gaines reacted in fury, and the Code backed off. But Gaines was done.

Gaines tried publishing some illustrated fiction titles in a new format he called picto-fiction, for which Orlando also did some fine work, but they failed, and so he was left with *Mad* as his only remaining title. When Harvey Kurtzman tried to force Gaines to give him a majority ownership stake in *Mad*, Gaines angrily refused. Kurtzman departed to do the short-lived *Trump* for Hugh Hefner, taking Jack Davis and Will Elder with him.

Wood, too, had agreed to go with Kurtzman, but Orlando remained loyal to Gaines, and he persuaded Wood to stay at *Mad*. Knowing how much Wood hated working from Kurtzman's layouts, Orlando recalled that he "played that card like you wouldn't believe."

Orlando was also one of the people who advised Gaines to rehire Feldstein — whom Gaines had reluctantly let go when the last picto-fiction titles were canceled — to be the new editor of *Mad*.

But Orlando, despite his loyalty to Gaines, was not working for *Mad* at that time, and he had to scramble for work. Like many of his EC colleagues, he wound up working for the low-paying Classics Illustrated, illustrating Charles Dickens's *A Tale of Two Cities*, Rudyard Kipling's *Kim*, the biblical epic *Ben-Hur*, and contributing to Classics Illustrated's *World Around Us* series. He worked there from 1956 to 1959, even as he contributed stories to Atlas's Code-approved "mystery" comics such as *Mystic* and *Astonishing*. He also provided illustrations for a children's encyclopedia art-directed by Jack Kamen that included artwork by EC alumni Wood, Reed Crandall, George Evans, and Al Williamson.

VERY FUNNY! I'M HYSTERICAL!
OH COME! IT WASN'T THAT HILARIOUS! ALTHOUGH I MUST ADMIT THAT AT TIMES MY SOPHISTICATED WIT AND CLEVER REPARTEE PRODUCE REACTIONS SOMEWHAT RESEMBLING OUTBURSTS OF LAUGHTER...

Orlando went back to work for Gaines and Feldstein at *Mad* in 1957 and stayed through the mid-1960s. One of the features he made his own was "Scenes We'd Like to See." His lushly rendered wash stories for *Mad* highlighted Orlando's gift for humorous subjects (which had earlier been on display in his stories for EC's *Panic,* all of which appear in *The Thing From The Grave And Other Stories*).

Later in life, after Gaines had become a multimillionaire because of *Mad*, he became a wine connoisseur, collecting and relishing many fine vintages. It was Joe Orlando who initially encouraged Gaines to expand his oenophilic horizons. Orlando and Gaines were notorious trenchermen on the legendary *Mad* trips abroad, often eating full meals in four or five restaurants in one day.

Orlando never officially resigned from *Mad*, he just stopped contributing. His ex-wife worked in the office, and she became annoyed when Orlando would show up to deliver his work. Gaines, hoping to avoid friction, asked Orlando to use the mailroom entrance. Ultimately, Orlando got fed up with the back-door treatment and stopped coming in.

But even without *Mad* (and its high page rates), the 1960s were a busy time for Orlando. He contributed to several early issues of *Daredevil* for Marvel. (His old partner Wallace Wood followed him on the title.) After *Daredevil*, Orlando went to Warren Publishing and helped Jim Warren launch *Creepy*, *Blazing Combat*, and *Eerie* as an artist, story editor, and cover painter.

Orlando's work for Warren was as good as anything he'd done for EC, and it allowed him to do some impressive wash artwork. His work for *Blazing Combat* (including the infamous "Landscape!") was particularly impressive (*Blazing Combat*, Fantagraphics Books, 2018). When Wood got his own line of comics to package and edit, Orlando contributed pencils to an issue of *Dynamo*, a *T.H.U.N.D.E.R. Agents* spin-off title.

But the biggest factor in Orlando's post-EC career was his move to DC Comics, which would dominate his professional life from the mid-1960s until his death in 1998 and take him to the top of the comic book business.

Orlando's entrée into the ranks of DC regulars came via writer/editor E. Nelson Bridwell, a DC staffer who was one of the first comic book fans to break into the industry. Bridwell knew Orlando's work from the EC days, and he had crossed paths with the artist when Bridwell had done occasional work for *Mad*. So when Bridwell needed an artist for his new superhero parody, *The Inferior Five*, he thought that Orlando's penchant for wacky humor and his clean, realistic drawing style would fit nicely.

From there, Orlando went on to draw *Swing With Scooter*, DC's attempt to cash in

on Archie-style teen comics, something that "shocked the *Archie* people," Orlando remembered with amusement, "because they thought they owned that particular style."

Working for DC helped Orlando forge a friendship with Carmine Infantino, who became DC's Editorial Director in the late 1960s. Infantino promoted Orlando, along with Joe Kubert and Mike Sekowsky, to editorial positions, which enabled Orlando to stop freelancing and have a regular job.

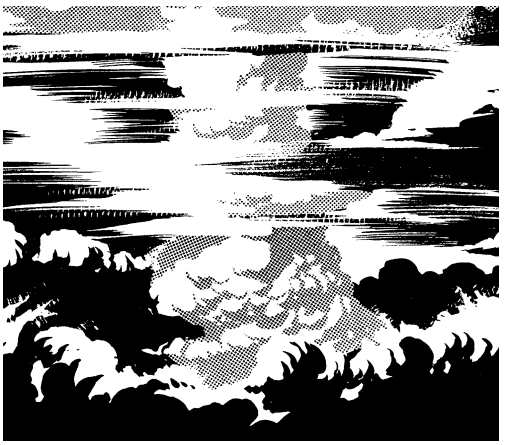
With his long years of experience, and an eye for talented newcomers, Orlando proved to be a superb editor. Among his many accomplishments, Orlando revived *The Phantom Stranger*, revamped DC's "mystery" titles *House of Mystery* and *House of Secrets* (turning them into toned-down, Code-approved versions of the classic EC horror comics, including wisecracking hosts, named Cain, Abel, and Eve), masterminded DC's offbeat humor title, *Plop* (bringing Bill Gaines on board as a consultant), and brought talents like Sergio Aragonés, Bernie Wrightson, Michael Kaluta, and Arthur Suydam into the DC fold. He also gave work to former EC colleagues like Wood, Ric Estrada, Alex Toth, and writer Jack Oleck (who had contributed numerous scripts to EC's horror and shock titles and became one of the most prolific contributors to DC's mystery titles). Those titles, along with the others that Orlando shepherded into existence (*Sinister House of Secret Love*, *Weird War Tales*, *Weird Mystery Tales*, *Weird Western Tales*) laid the groundwork for DC's groundbreaking Vertigo line.

Orlando proved to be a creative and innovative editor with a shrewd eye for talent and a nurturing spirit. His friends called him "The Godfather of Comics." While he handled special projects for DC and eventually rose to become vice president, he also found time to do outside work, including covers and interior art for *Newsweek* and comics and illustrations for *The National Lampoon*. When Bill Gaines died in 1992, it seemed logical for Orlando to be given the job of associate publisher for *Mad*, which by then was owned by Time-Warner, DC's parent company.

"I'm sure Bill Gaines is rolling in his grave," Orlando noted wryly.

Orlando retired in 1996 but continued to work on cover ideas for *Mad* and miscellaneous projects. He died in 1998, survived by his wife, Karin, and four children. He was inducted into the Will Eisner Comic Book Hall of Fame in 2007.

Perhaps former DC Comics Publisher Paul Levitz, who started in the business as Orlando's assistant, said it best in the eulogy he delivered at Orlando's funeral: "Few creative people had the range of impact that Joe did. His career spanned EC's best science fiction to *Sesame Street*, *The Inferior Five*, to guiding a generation's worth of superhero toys and T-shirts for DC, *Mad* magazine satires and sea monkey ads, and simultaneously spearing Kissinger on the cover of *Newsweek* and chronicling 'First Lay Comics' in *National Lampoon*. Not to mention the battalion of us he taught and inspired."



S.C. "STEVE" RINGGENBERG *has been an EC Comics fan since his early teens and has had the good fortune to interview many EC contributors, including publisher William Gaines, editors Al Feldstein and Harvey Kurtzman, and artists John Severin, George Evans, Jack Davis, Jack Kamen, Al Williamson, Angelo Torres, Frank Frazetta, and Sheldon Moldoff. He has written comics scripts for DC, Marvel, Bongo,* Heavy Metal, *Red Circle, and Americomics. He has authored six young adult novels and co-authored* Al Williamson: Hidden Lands. *He recently published a short story collection,* Zombie Gundown and Other Tales, *and has completed a science fiction novel.*

REED CRANDALL (1917–1982, b. Winslow, Ind.) graduated from the Cleveland School of Art in Ohio in 1939. Crandall briefly worked at a children's book publisher in New York but soon found his way to the Eisner and Iger Studio. Much of his early work appeared in Quality Comics publications such as *Hit, Smash,* and *Military Comics.* Crandall, who served briefly in the Army Air Force during World War II, became one of the primary artists for *Blackhawk,* a team of swashbuckling aviators that starred in *Military Comics* (renamed *Modern Comics* after the war) and in its own title.

Crandall started at EC in 1953, drawing for titles in different genres, including *The Haunt of Fear, Crime SuspenStories, Two-Fisted Tales, Piracy,* and *Weird Fantasy.* After the mid-1950s backlash against comics, he freelanced for Atlas (later Marvel) Comics and Gilberton's Classics Illustrated. He worked on the Catholic-oriented comic book *Treasure Chest* from 1960 to 1972, also doing stories for Warren Publishing's *Creepy, Eerie,* and *Blazing Combat.* He drew the *Buster Brown* comics for Buster Brown shoe stores for many years, and during the 1960s he drew *Flash Gordon* for King Comics.

In the late 1960s, Crandall left New York for Wichita, Kansas, to care for his mother. He ceased drawing after he suffered a stroke in 1974. He died in 1982 of a heart attack. Crandall was inducted into the Jack Kirby Hall of Fame in 1998 and into the Will Eisner Comic Book Hall of Fame in 2009.

GEORGE EVANS (1920–2001, b. Harwood, Pennsylvania) studied illustration via a correspondence school and learned about airplanes while serving in the U.S. Army during World War II. Already established as a pulp magazine artist, he began working for comic book publishers such as Fiction House, Better Publications, and Fawcett in the booming comics market that sprang to life in the late 1940s.

Although best known for his aviation work in *Aces High,* Evans was a reliable workhorse for EC. He contributed to *Haunt of Fear, Tales From the Crypt,* and *Frontline Combat,* among other titles. His cover to *Crime SuspenStories* #23 was held up as an example of potent, lurid comics-making during 1954's infamous Senate subcommittee hearings on juvenile delinquency.

Evans drew a feature for *Boys' Life* magazine following the EC era and ghosted for George Wunder on *Terry and the Pirates.* In the 1960s, he drew for Gilberton, Warren, and Gold Key. His work appeared in *National Lampoon* and Marvel Comics in the 1970s.

Evans drew the strip *Secret Agent Corrigan* from 1980 to 1996. He also enjoyed a second career as a painter of aviation scenes for everything from calendars to book covers. Relocating to central Pennsylvania, Evans worked intermittently from the mid-1990s until his death in 2001.

ALBERT B. FELDSTEIN (1925–2014. b. Brooklyn, New York) began working in comics at 15 at the Eisner and Iger Studio. He graduated from the High School of Music & Art, then attended classes at Brooklyn College and the Art Students League before entering the Air Corps during World War II. While in the Special Forces, he designed posters, painted murals, and drew a comic strip called *Baffy* for the base newspaper in Blytheville, Arkansas. After the war, he worked for Iger again before moving on to Fox Feature Syndicate.

Feldstein began his career at EC in 1947. Though initially hired as an artist, he is best known for his writing. He also served as editor for most of EC's comic book titles. With Bill Gaines, he created EC's famous line of horror and science fiction comics, including *Tales From the Crypt* and *Weird Science.* He became editor of *Mad* in 1956, where he remained until 1984.

After moving to Jackson Hole, Wyoming, he fulfilled his lifelong dream of becoming a fine artist. He later moved to Livingston, Montana, with his wife, Michelle. In 1999, he received an honorary Doctorate of the Arts degree from Rocky Mountain College in Billings, Montana.

Feldstein was inducted into the Will Eisner Comic Book Hall of Fame in 2003. In 2011, he received the Bram Stoker Award for Lifetime Achievement from the Horror Writers Association. He died at home, April 29, 2014.

WILLIAM MAXWELL GAINES (1922–1992, b. New York City) was the son of M.C. Gaines, the founder of EC Comics. Bill Gaines was studying chemistry at New York University when his father died in 1947, leaving him to run the family business. EC's comics were selling poorly, so Bill moved to re-invigorate the company by breaking from the educational, humor, kiddy, Western, and romance titles that EC was then known for.

He kept Johnny Craig, Al Feldstein, Graham Ingels, and Wallace Wood, and brought in Reed Crandall, Jack Davis, Will Elder, George Evans, Jack Kamen, Bernard Krigstein, Harvey Kurtzman, Joe Orlando, John Severin, Marie Severin, and Al Williamson, among others.

Under Bill Gaines, EC became known for its popular horror, crime, war, and science fiction comics, such as *Tales From the Crypt, Crime SuspenStories, Two-Fisted Tales,* and *Weird Science* — and, of course, *Mad,* which created its own category.

In 1954, Gaines badly mishandled his appearance before a Senate subcommittee investigating the alleged link between juvenile delinquency and comic books. Shortly thereafter, EC fell victim to the Comics Code Authority, an organization hastily put together by a group of comic book publishers to head off Congressional pressure.

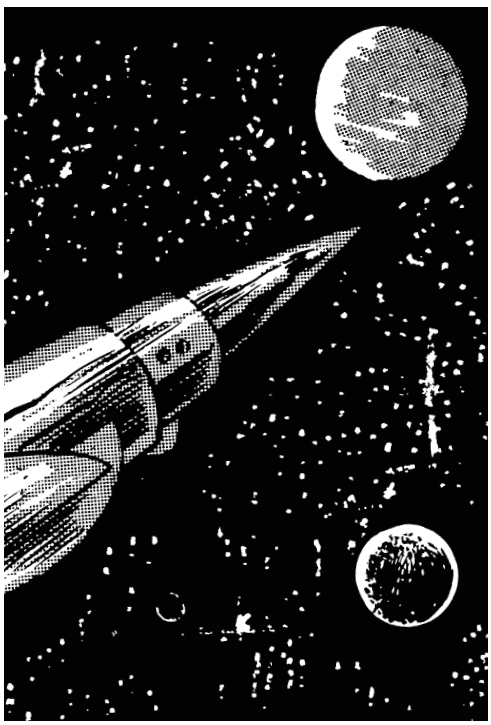
By 1956, EC had dropped all of its titles except *Mad*. Gaines remained publisher of *Mad* until his death in 1992. He was inducted into the Will Eisner Hall of Fame in 1993 and the Jack Kirby Hall of Fame in 1997.

WALLACE ("WALLY"/"WOODY") ALLAN WOOD (1927–1981, b. Menahga, Minnesota) is universally renowned for his science fiction stories for EC Comics, for his significant contributions to the formative years of *Mad*, and for his "Panels That Always Work," a highly prized, concentrated primer for cartoonists. He created the spy strip *Cannon*, the adventure series *Sally Forth*, the comic book series *T.H.U.N.D.E.R. Agents*, and made significant creative contributions to *Daredevil, Mars Attacks,* and *Power Girl.* A veteran of World War II, he began work in 1948 as a letterer and assistant to Will Eisner. Wood's art graced not only comic books and comic strips, but record album covers, trading cards, posters, ads, TV, and much more.

In 1966 Wood began publishing *witzend*, a landmark "zine" that published comics created and owned by the medium's top talents and hip, young newcomers alike. With the fifth issue, Wood handed over stewardship of the magazine to Bill Pearson. Wood's personal affairs were troubled — he was a chain-smoker, an alcoholic, and he was divorced twice. In 1981 after multiple strokes and daunted by the prospect of dialysis for the rest of his days, he ended his life with a handgun.

Despite his tragedy, Wood is one of the most accomplished talents in the history of comics. He was the recipient of the National Cartoonists Society's Best Comic Book award in 1957, 1959, and 1965. He garnered two Alley Awards, a Best Foreign Cartoonist Award (Angoulême International Comics Festival, 1978), multiple Hugo Award nominations, and has been inducted into the Jack Kirby Hall of Fame, the Inkwell Hall of Fame, and the Will Eisner Comic Book Hall of Fame.

JANICE LEE *contributed to these profiles.*



TED WHITE

Crime, Horror, Terror, Gore, Depravity, Disrespect For Established Authority— And Science Fiction, Too!

THE UPS AND DOWNS OF EC COMICS

M.C. Gaines was both a practical man, credited with inventing the comic book as we know it (although comic strips had been reprinted in book form for decades prior to his 1933 *Funnies on Parade*), and a visionary.

In the late 1930s, he formed a partnership with the owners of Detective Comics, Inc. (subsequently best known as DC Comics) and began publishing a series of superhero titles: *All-American Comics* (which featured the Green Lantern), *Flash Comics* (The Flash), *Sensation Comics* (Wonder Woman), *All-Star Comics* (The Justice Society of America), and *Comic Cavalcade* (a fatter 15¢ anthology of his superheroes).

But these were conventional commercial comic books of their day and, in essence, copies of DC's *Action Comics* (Superman), *Detective Comics* (Batman), and *World's Finest* (15¢ anthology), identical in formatting. Although successful, none (perhaps excepting Wonder Woman's titles) matched the success of DC's Superman and Batman titles. All were published under the DC imprint, and the children who read them probably saw little difference among them.

These comics were forthrightly aimed at kids — theoretically 8-year-olds. Although comics were hugely popular and widely read by World War II and Korean War GIs, the fiction was maintained throughout the 1950s that the average comic book reader was still only 8 years old.

From their inception, comic books were looked down upon by much of American society. They cost only 10¢ and were often thrown away after reading. Many teachers regarded comic book reading as a detriment to genuine literacy. The theory was that kids who read comic books would never go on to read "real" literature — they would demand pictures with their prose.

Gaines thought that the comic book medium could be much more than just throwaway entertainment, and he set out to prove it, first with *Picture Stories From the Bible*. It was earnestly

done and intended to be educational rather than entertaining. Despite the best intentions of Gaines and his editors, writers, and artist (Don Cameron), it was pretty dull going for a comic book. But Gaines believed in it and pushed it.

Other matters were transpiring behind the scenes, and Gaines parted ways with DC in 1945, selling them all his titles except *Picture Stories From the Bible*.

Gaines began a new publishing imprint for his *Picture Stories* comics — Educational Comics, or "EC." In addition to *Picture Stories From the Bible*, he published *Picture Stories From American History*, *Picture Stories From Science*, and *Picture Stories From World History*.

These were clearly intended to be sold in or through schools, and to be used with appropriate curricula. They were an idealistic venture, akin to *Classics Illustrated*, designed to prove that the lowly comic book could attain loftier goals of enlightenment.

But, like *Classics Illustrated*, they made no dent on academia. To teachers and other figures of authority over children, they were still "just comic books" and dismissed out of hand. And to the kids — their putative audience — they were dull stuff, lacking the excitement and panache of any superhero comic. They were not a commercial success.

When Gaines had left DC to found EC, he took one DC employee with him to be his business manager — Sol Cohen, whose first job as a teenager had been for DC, checking Manhattan comic book racks for sales movement during Superman's launch in 1938. Cohen had worked his way up through sales and distribution (DC and Independent News, an increasingly important distributor, had interlinking ownership), and he had a promising career at DC. But when Gaines asked Cohen to join him in his fledgling new company, Cohen accepted.

This proved to be a significant move for a reason no one anticipated. Because in 1947, M.C. Gaines and a friend, Sam Irwin, lost their lives in a boating accident on Lake Placid in New York. Gaines's final act was to save the life of his friend's 8-year-old son by throwing the boy to safety.

Gaines's son, William M. Gaines, inherited the company. But Bill was distant from his father, didn't care for comics, and was attending New York University with plans to become a chemistry teacher. Although entreated by his mother to take over the reins at EC, Bill was reluctant, and, for the first year, did little but show up at the office periodically to sign checks.

Into this vacuum stepped Sol Cohen, EC's business manager. As he told me, years later, "the company was going down the toilet. The *Picture Stories* comics weren't selling and neither were the kiddy comics. I had to do something just to save my job."

His first act was to change "Educational Comics" to "Entertaining Comics."

"'Educational' was a word no comic-buying kid wanted to see. It was a kiss of death on any comic book," he told me.

His second act was to dump the *Picture Stories* titles and change the kiddy titles to crime, romance, and Western titles. (Due to postal regulations concerning second class mailing privileges — crucial for distribution purposes — it was financially wiser to change titles, continuing the previous numbering, than to drop one title and start a new one.)

1947 was a decisive turning point, although most of Cohen's changes occurred in 1948. In the late summer of 1947, *Moon Girl and the Prince* was launched. Moon Girl appears to have been a Wonder Woman copy. It went through two title changes before becoming *A Moon, A Girl, Romance*.

By then, Bill Gaines was the editor. In early 1948, EC launched *War Against Crime*.

By 1949, Bill Gaines had become interested in comic books. Sol Cohen moved on (to Avon Books), and Bill fully took over the company. He began bringing in the artists and editor/writers who would become known for their subsequent EC work.

Al Feldstein was brought in as a romance artist, although his first work for EC was for the Western title *Saddle Justice* in 1948.

Johnny Craig may have preceded Feldstein with work in the first *Gunfighter*, which also used Graham Ingels.

Harry Harrison and Wallace Wood (as collaborators) made their first appearance at EC in two Western titles that appeared at the end of 1949, *Gunfighter* and *Saddle Romances* (where Harrison, solo, had appeared in a previous issue).

The evolution of EC from 1947 to 1950 is one full of hints of the forthcoming "New Trend" titles. But fans of the latter titles may not find a lot to like in the earlier comics from EC. The quality was spotty, and there was not yet any focus on a unique style or approach to comics.

1950 was the year it all came together for EC. That spring saw the transformation of *War Against Crime* into *The Vault of Horror*, *Crime Patrol* into *The Crypt of Terror* (later to become *Tales From the Crypt*), and *Gunfighter* into *The Haunt of Fear*, thus successfully establishing EC's horror title trio.

The same month *Haunt of Fear* made its debut so did two science fiction titles, *Weird Science* (with #12, previously *Saddle Romances*), and *Weird Fantasy* (with #13, previously *A Moon, A Girl, Romance*).

In the fall of 1950, *Two-Fisted Tales* made its debut, taking over the numbering of *Haunt of Fear,* so its first issue was designated #18. This was done to satisfy — or dodge — those postal regulations. *Haunt of Fear* itself continued, renumbered, with #4. It confused the fans but made the business office happy. *Crime SuspenStories* premiered about the same time (starting with #1), thus setting in place EC's basic New Trend stable of titles.

Two-Fisted Tales was Harvey Kurtzman's first title, and it brought a sense of realism, irony, and anti-romance to war stories. *Frontline Combat* would join it half a year later.

Crime SuspenStories was Johnny Craig's title (as was, to a lesser degree, *Vault of Horror;* Al Feldstein was the overall SF and horror editor).

By 1951, the classic EC lineup was almost in place, lacking only *Shock SuspenStories* (1952) and *Mad* (1952).

The first half of the 1950s was EC's glory time — for better and for worse. For us comics fans, it was the best of times — crowned by superlative art and provocative stories — while for those who watched sternly over us, tut-tutting, it was the worst of times — a triumph of gore and disgust.

The basic "crime" of EC was that it did not edit its comics for those 8-year-old kids. The editors aimed higher, at a somewhat older, more mature reader. (13-year-olds, perhaps — I was 13 when I discovered ECs, and I had by then mostly given up on other comics.)

The naysayers won, in the short term. There were state and federal inquiries (inquisitions?), local comic book bonfires, and ultimately *Seduction of the Innocent* and the Comics Code. The New Trend comics were shelved in favor of a "New Direction" and new titles — horror and crime conspicuous by their absence.

But the tide had turned against EC. Its competitors wanted it put out of business (and many claim the Comics Code Authority was formed for that purpose).

In 1956, Bill Gaines gave up a losing fight and folded all his titles except *Mad* — which outlived him and continued its reliable formula through several corporate mergers through 2019, when, after 67 years, it went all (or mostly all) reprint.

However, in the long term, EC has survived. There have been countless reprints of the comics themselves, as both comic books and as hardcover books. There have been TV shows and movies based on *Tales From the Crypt*. And now there are these collections from Fantagraphics, showcasing for the first time the individual artists whose works personified EC.

Theirs was a magical time — a time when young, ambitious artists decided for themselves to take comic book art to heights never previously dreamed of, heights that equaled the best work of the greatest of the newspaper strip artists of the 20th century.

Some of them went on to major successes in commercial art — book covers, movie posters, *TV Guide* covers — while others lived and eventually died in poverty.

No one told them then that what they were doing was a waste of time and ambition. We are all better off for their accomplishments, and we celebrate their work here.

TED WHITE *has been a comics fan for most of his life and, with Larry Stark, Bhob Stewart, and Fred von Bernewitz, was a seminal EC fan in the early 1950s. He has been a (still-quoted) jazz critic, a science fiction writer and editor, and a radio deejay. He wrote the Captain America novel* The Great Gold Steal *in 1966 and edited* Heavy Metal *in 1980.*

THE FANTAGRAPHICS EC ARTISTS' LIBRARY

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The Comics Journal Library Vol. 8: The EC Artists Part 1

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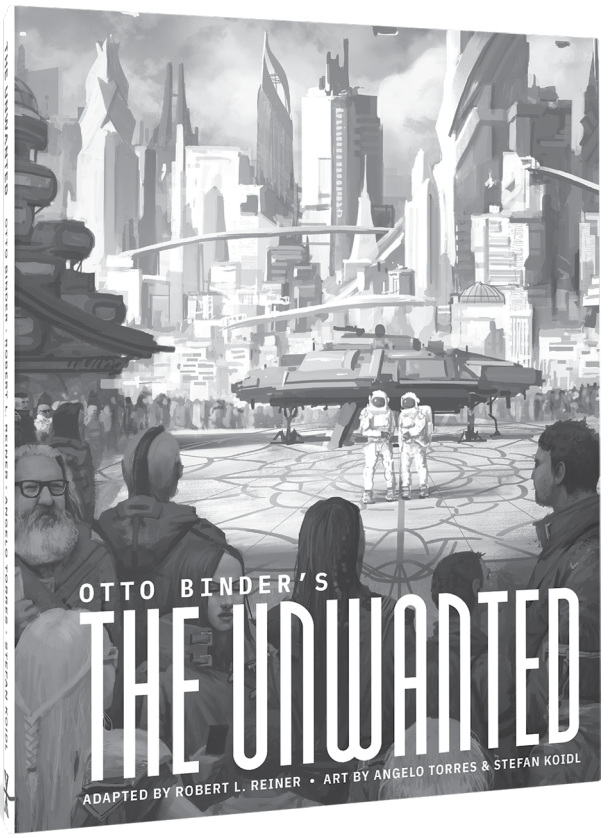
JUDGMENT DAY FOR EARTH

The Mastermen called it a "census," but it was so much more. If its citizens proved worthy, the Earth would join the interstellar confederation and reap the benefits of advanced alien technology, food, medicine, and educational resources the likes of which could scarcely be imagined.

But first, there was the question of race ...



THE UNWANTED

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Uncannily perceptive and prescient when it was written in 1953, EC writer Otto Binder's *The Unwanted* went unsold for more than a decade until he finally gave it to a fanzine publisher — who promptly got out of the fanzine business. And so it languished, unread, in a yellowing file folder for decades.

Now, unearthed and illustrated by EC artist Angelo Torres and his international collaborator Stefan Koidl, Fantagraphics Underground Press ushers in this previously unknown mini-masterpiece by the writer of Captain Marvel, Superman, Captain America, and the "human" robot, Adam Link.

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JOE ORLANDO'S PREMIER EC SCIENCE FICTION COLLECTION!

JOE ORLANDO initially teamed with Wallace Wood but then went solo and became a mainstay at EC Comics, especially in such titles as *Weird Science*. This volume collects his first two dozen science fiction adventures.

All of them, scripted by Al Feldstein, serve up unexpected shock endings, including a time-travel twister in which a man visits the past and (unknowingly) romances his own mother (!), a look at a gender-switched future where women are the breadwinners and men the homemakers, a good old-fashioned "worlds collide" disaster, a prescient animal rights parable, and lots of rollicking space opera, aliens, and, of course, interplanetary monsters (some of them human!). Introduction by Thommy Burns.

Bonus: EC's complete "flying saucer report," with art by Orlando, Wallace Wood, George Evans, and Reed Crandall.

Plus: a heartfelt foreword by former DC publisher Paul Levitz, who got his start when Orlando hired him as an assistant.